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BELLGROVE CASTLE.

A ROMANCE.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

BELLGROVE CASTLE;

OR,

THE HORRID SPECTRE!

A Romance.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY T. H. WHITE.

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BELLGROVE CASTLE;

OR,

THE HORRID SPECTRE!

CHAPTER I.

WE have announced the good understanding and harmony which had subsisted between the families of Ashgrove and the castle hitherto.

A circumstance, however, now happened which totally interrupted their intercourse with each other.

Ere the cup could be advanced to the lip some envious demon hurled it from the grasp !

The day following that on which Orlando and his family had dined at the vicarage, as the doctor was amusing himself with a walk in the garden he observed a piece of paper in the form of a letter laying on the ground.

He immediately picked it up, and, examining the superscription, found it was directed to the Hon. Orlando Bellgrove.

As he was folding it up for the purpose of restoring it to his young friend he observed the name of Monimia Pritchards; and, on taking up one of the folds, he caught the expressions—'Base! perfidious! cruel!'

The doctor now thought himself

warranted

warranted in perusing the contents, which contained, in a female hand, a moving and affecting remonstrance upon being deserted, and in a state where protection was more than usually necessary, and intreating the person to whom it was directed not in a base and treacherous manner to seduce the affections of an amiable young lady, who was totally ignorant of his insidious designs.

The doctor read the note over three times, not believing the evidence of his own senses at the first. He then put it into his pocket, venting an ejaculation at the perfidy of mankind.

When he got home he repaired to his closet, where he sat an hour or two in the most painful meditation.

His daughter's welfare and his own happiness were so intimately con-

nected, that he concluded Orlando's treachery had rendered both forever lost.

He was tortured with a variety of resolutions; sometimes he thought of shewing the contents of the letter to Monimia, that she might learn to detest a character so unworthy of her; but, recollecting the difficulty of raising a prejudice against an object of affection, he declined such a measure.

At other times he resolved to confront Orlando with the evidence he had found against him; but his pride would not permit him to appear sensible of so degrading an imposition intended his family; he, therefore, abandoned that design.

At last he suggested a plan, which he determined to put into immediate execution.

About

About sixty miles distant from the vicarage lived a maiden lady, a sister of the doctor, whom he had ever been extremely partial to.

This lady was described to be at the point of death by notice which he had that very day received, and which re-requested, if it was any way possible, to see him and Monimia before she expired.

The doctor, therefore, without hinting the least about the letter, which he had found in the garden, desired his daughter to make instant preparation for their immediate departure, at the same time shewing her the letter he had received from her aunt. Monimia shewed every readiness to obey, little imagining the uneasy sensations which at that time agitated her father.

The day after their departure our hero presented himself at the vicarage. Nothing could equal his surprise when the servants informed him, that the doctor, Monimia, and little Henry had set out in a post chaise for some distant part, of which they were ignorant. He enquired if there was any message for him or any of his family? and received for answer, that there was nothing of the sort left at their departure.

Orlando rode away from the vicarage quite dispirited; and, as he proceeded, fell into a reverie on a circumstance so unexpected and mysterious.

He spent the remainder of the day in application to the doctor's acquaintances, not one of whom could give him the least information on the cause of his departure.

Orlando

Orlando was stung with anguish and disappointment in thus losing his Monimia.

He reasoned a long time on whatever probable circumstances might have occasioned her absence, but in vain! The more he ruminated, the greater the perplexity and mystery.

In this state of mortification he returned home, where he found the baron and baroness engaged in a party at quadrille.

The company suspended for a while their amusement, to pay their respects to him; all which at any other time would have been highly gratifying; but he was in no humour now to relish these ceremonies.

He felt a pensiveness which he tried hard to conceal

It was, however, too difficult a task for him, and a sigh would at times escape him before he had power to check it.

Orlando was intreated much to join in the party, an invitation which he evaded, by saying he had promised Julia some lessons in Italian. He then retired to the study, where she was in waiting for him.

He was continually putting his invention to the rack to discover traces of Monimia.

Whole hours would he spend in contemplation of her charms.

Often would he range about the most solitary walks round the castle, and, after fatiguing himself with exercise and anxiety, throw himself upon some elevated plot of grass,

where, giving vent to his sorrow, he would indulge a melancholy reverie almost to insensibility.

Sometimes he would take a lonely journey to the vicarage, and, in the adjoining premises, roam till almost midnight; and, returning home, would devote the night to chagrin and despair.

The uneasy state of his mind produced a visible alteration in his person; he became pale and emaciated, refused his usual food, and secreted himself the greater part of his time from the family.

At length the baron with concern observed this change, and took the first opportunity, when they were alone, to question him on the subject.

Orlando was shy and answered his father's interrogatories with great reserve.

At length the baron, seriously alarmed at his son's state of mind, plainly intimated, that he thought it arose from the affair at the vicarage.

"The vicarage, sir!" exclaimed Orlando, with a strong emotion.—

"Do you know when M[illegible] and the doctor will return?"

"Not soon, I hope," answered the the baron.

"Not soon!" cried Orlando—(turning pale and trembling),—"for Heaven's sake, sir, why so cruel a wish?"

"It

"It stimulates me almost to madness."

"Pshaw, pshaw! young man," cried his father, your impetuosity needs a little wholesome advice."

"I must beg, dear sir, that you will explain what appears very strange and forbidding."

"My dear boy," answered the baron, "do not give way to a vehemence of sentiment, at once unmanly and destructive to your peace."

Orlando stood in an attitude of surprise and impatience. At length he exclaimed—"For Heaven's sake, sir, do not keep me in suspense; if you have any thing of importance to apprise me of, divulge it instantly, and let me know the worst."

"Be a little moderate," cried the baron; "a father's advice should be attended to with a little more respect. You well know I would advise nothing but what is conducive to your happiness."

Orlando was instantly calm, and addressed his father in a tone of submission and respect.

"I have a long time," continued the baron, "admired the attachment subsisting between you and Monimia, and often formed the most pleasing ideas of seeing you united to a person of her worth and merit; but visions of mere sublunary happiness were never intended to be relied on, and I am sorry to relinquish all hopes of it in that quarter."

Orlando stood gazing at his father *with* astonishment, and at length ex-

claimed

claimed---" What dreadful obstacle is it, sir, that forbids me to hope for happiness, where alone I should expect to find it?"

" Orlando, be not too sanguine in your hopes or opinion."

" My hopes, sir, are centered in Monimia, and as to my opinion, that can never alter."

" Then are you miserable forever! Monimia is unworthy your regard."

The unhappy youth became instantly fired with an emotion of love, jealousy, and despair!---He stood fixed and motionless with surprise.

At length, recovering himself, he exclaimed---" Impossible! Monimia is all goodness, she possesses every excellence and perfection!"

" Orlando,"

"Orlando," cried the baron, "consider what I said before---

"Your welfare is too dear to me to wish to interrupt it.

"If I have caused you a few uneasy sensations, it has been from a kind motive.

"Here, I think, is sufficient authority for any harsh expressions I may have made use of," putting at the same time a letter into the hands of his son.

Orlando now took the letter and read as follows:

"A well-wisher of Baron Bellgrove's family
"thinks it proper to advise him to guard against
"the insidious designs of the family at the vica-
"rage.

“ The doctor and his daughter are at present
“ in a state of seclusion; and, no doubt, when
“ they return, will offer some plausible and ob-
“ vious reason for it; but the truth is, retire-
“ ment has, more than once, been found neces-
“ sary to preserve the lady's reputation.

“ The doctor, under the flattering hopes your
“ family affords him, is unusually chagrined at
“ the affair; but, with his unparalleled ingenu-
“ ity, will, no doubt, attempt every artifice to
“ elude suspicion; but, once more, be on your
“ guard; suffer not a noble, ingenuous, and
“ unsuspecting youth, to become the dupe of
“ lust, intrigue, and ambition.”

When Orlando had read the letter, with a trembling hand he returned it to his father, and exclaimed---(with a sigh almost sufficient to burst his heart's-strings, striking his forhead at the same time)---“ Oh, God! I am the completest wretch alive!”

The baron begged him to be composed, intimating, that ‘ He thought it

it a happy circumstance the discovery was made before it would have been too late to recede."

The baron and his son soon after separated, the former not a little unhappy at Orlando's disappoinrment; and the latter, venting execrations at the fickleness and inconstancy of the sex.

The unhappy youth, soon as he retired, fell into a train of reflections on the intelligence he had received.

After his tumults had in a small degree subsided---

He felt a returning love for Monimia, which shook his belief in what he had read.

" It cannot be; Monimia false!--- *sure it must be* some hellish device to

calumniate

calumniate even innocence itself!"---But then, when he recollected the corroborating circumstances of her being absent, and the cold indifference with which she had left the vicarage, all the horrors of disappointed and insulted love, took possession of him.

He endured a struggle of contending ideas, which drove him almost to phrenzy; in the midst of which, his agitated mind was forming a variety of desperate resolutions.

"I will bid adieu," cried he, "to a spot where every happiness has deserted me—a place, now loathsome to my eyes; and, in some solitary, secluded, distant part, breathe out the remainder of an existence too wretched for me to sustain!"

At another time he would vow to pursue, and upbraid her with her per-

fidy; but, suddenly recollecting his ignorance of her place of concealment---"Perfidious woman!" exclaimed he, "continue in your state of privacy, Orlando no longer wishes to call you out into the world, that would spurn at thee for thy inconstancy."

As he was uttering his ravings in a recluse part of the garden, he was suddenly surprised with the appearance of Julia.

Though Julia seemed in his mind to bear every feature of female beauty and perfection, his recent discovery made him recoil at the approach of any thing in the form of woman.

He started aside from the path he was pursuing, and would have evaded entirely any conference with his charming friend.

The

The tender soul of Julia was overcome with sympathy at the melancholy which preyed upon Orlando, too visibly to be unobserved; and, when she saw the injury it had done his constitution, love and pity prompted her to a freedom she would by no means have assumed on any other occasion.

She quickly noticed his aversion, and, stepping after him, exclaimed---

"Are you not well, Mr. Bellgrove?"

Orlando, for the moment, cast a glance of dislike on her (her voice sounding, at that period, so much like Monimia's); and, seeming to pause for a reply---

"I hope Mr. Bellgrove will permit me," cried Julia, "to enquire after his health." "Not

"Not so well as formerly," answered Orlando.

"I am sorry for it," cried Julia, "for more sakes than one."

"You do not know, Julia, how much you distress me with that remark."

"Is it possible," said Julia, "that such a hint can be painful to you?"

"Julia!" cried Orlando peevishly, "do not afflict me so far, as to harrow up feelings already hardly to be borne."

"I refrain, sir, from pressing a subject, which seems to cause you so much emotion; but really my attachment to my friend made me desirous of enquiring after her welfare."

"She

"She is well, I believe; and, if it be possible, I hope is happy," replied Orlando, with a deep sigh.

"Have you seen Monimia lately?" said Julia.

"No."

"Then you have not been at the vicarage for some time?"

"Yes, every day; but Monimia's gone! for ever fled from honesty and Orlando!"

"Oh! Heaven!" cried Julia, "spare my friend! do not brand her in such harsh and horrid terms."

"Would to Heaven she had never given me cause!"

"Mr. Bellgrove!" exclaimed she, "I en-

"I entreat you to hear me in behalf of worth and excellence.

"Monimia is innocent; some monster in human shape has traduced her."

"Shew me the wretch that could do a deed so diabolical, and from his polluted breast I'd pluck his heart, and scatter it like carrion for the fowls of Heaven to feed on!"

"Be not so warm," cried Julia; "time, I hope, will vindicate my friend. In the mean time, wrong not the worthy object of your affections with vile suspicions."

"Forbear, forbear," said Orlando, "some other time we will resume the subject."

Julia, seeing the wretched state of his mind, became silent; and he, in

gloomy

gloomy reserve, stole away, and soon became invisible.

Julia returned home with a heavy heart; and, as soon as she gained her room, burst into a flood of tears, and for awhile sat ruminating on the unhappy state of affairs at the castle.

As she was pondering on some mode to adopt, to effect a reconciliation between the lovers, the baroness entered.

"Julia, my dear," cried she, "I have been seeking you almost every where; I have some news to tell you.

"To-morrow we are to have a a large party, among whom we shall be honoured with the company of Miss Pearlby.

"This lady will, I hope, in time

become a very near acquaintance among us.

"The baron, it is true, had relinquished all hopes of this affair; but, since some unexpected circumstances have arisen, he and Sir William have renewed their conversation about Orlando and Miss Pearlby, and hope, after all, to bring the matter to a favourable issue."

"Dear me, madam," said Julia, "I thought Mr. Bellgrove had been under engagements to Monimia!"

"So he was, my dear, and with the consent of all parties; indeed, the baron and I were charmed with the perfections of that young creature; but she is by no means a proper object for the affections of Orlando."

"Dear madam," cried Julia, "on

my

my knees let me intreat for my gentle friend."

"Not a word more on the subject, let me beg of you," cried the baroness gravely.

"You are young and totally unacquainted with the artifices of mankind."

"You will pardon, my dear madam, the freedom I have been guilty of in becoming an advocate for one whom I have always considered as a pattern of excellence."

"I do not blame you, my dear," cried the baroness, "for your good-nature; but you must allow persons of the age of the baron and myself to be better acquainted with life than one of your years."

"But, my dear madam, Orlando is consuming with grief at some base and wicked reports."

"Julia, don't be too positive in your opinions; you do not act the friend in entertaining such a sentiment. We both suffer inexpressible anxiety for our son; we are almost broken-hearted at his present situation, and it is with a view of diverting his mind from an object so unworthy of him, that we wish to promote the concern I have before hinted at; therefore, Julia, I request of you to try all you can to dissuade him from his former attachment, and to bring round a happy understanding between him and Miss Pearlby."

"I will use every means to promote the happiness of Orlando, undoubtedly!" cried Julia.

"Well, well, my dear," answered the baroness, "remember I call upon you, as the truest instance of your regard, to assist, as much as possible, mine and the baron's designs."

She now retired, and left Julia in a more embarrassed state than ever—finding herself divided between her duty to her generous benefactors and her esteem for her amiable friends.

Thus perplexed, she found herself but ill-adapted, the next day, to pay her court to Monimia's rival; and every time she found herself called upon to shew Miss Pearlby more than ordinary attention, it seemed to Julia like undermining the happiness and peace of mind of her much-loved friends.

At this meeting all was mirth and entertainment at the castle, except

with the wretched Orlando, who shewed such absence and inattention, as plainly denoted he was not at all a partaker of the amusements.

He broke suddenly off in several little undertakings, finding them tedious and insipid.

Orlando had long preserved the character of a well-bred, finished gentleman among his acquaintances; but those who had never seen him before carried away with them at this time a very opposite opinion.

Our hero was conscious of the infirmity he laboured under, and tho' in every advance he made to the female part of the company he strove to conceal it, yet the reserve which hung about him was interpreted by the majority of the company as the effect of *moroseness* of disposition.

The

The baron found himself disappointed in the hopes of Orlando exhibiting a partiality for Miss Pearlby.

Though he had dropped a hint or two on the subject to him before the arrival of the company, yet he could observe no instance to flatter his expectations.

However, he did not despair; the time was but early yet; and as marriage with that lady was what he had again set his heart on, he determined to exert himself, in many instances, to reconcile the mind of his son to it.

The baroness was animated with a like wish, and thought of a plan to expedite the affair, which she submitted to the baron; this was to invite Miss Pearlby to reside with them

a few weeks—a measure the baron instantly approved of, and both often regaled their ideas with the hopes of its success.

CHAP.

CHAPTER II.

IN the mean time, Osmond persevered in his assiduities to Julia, who, in a little time, found a growing partiality in his favour, in consequence of them.

Julia, however, thought it now time to guard against a still further increase of its influence.

She found herself yet young, and liable to error; she likewise recollected the situation she stood in with respect to her foster parents, and con-

sidered it as a point of duty to consult them in whatever point her own welfare might be effected.

She determined, therefore, to avoid that particularity which Osmond seemed desirous of respecting her, and to direct her conversation, in future, in a more general way.

This operated on him only as a stimulus to his passion.

He became every day more enamoured, and resolved at length to solicit the consent of the baron and baroness, for an union with Julia.

Osmond had hitherto exerted all the stratagems he was master of to accomplish his original purpose, but she was inflexibly virtuous.

Julia exhibited a soul so dignified and exalted as made him stagger in his designs, and, for the present, abandon all thoughts of them.

Neither the baron nor his lady were inattentive to his particular respect for Julia. They every day witnessed fresh instances of his attachment; and, as they considered the event of an union with Julia in a favourable point of view for her, they were not at all disposed to act in any way that might prevent such a circumstance.

Osmond's application to the baron and his lady, therefore, by no means surprised them; and the former was not a little pleased at the favourable answer he received.

He exulted in the prospect before

him, and increased still more in his assiduities to Julia.

Notwithstanding the precautions Julia had determined upon, she found it impossible to shake off Osmond's particularities in her favour; and, indeed, she had accustomed herself so long to listen to his insinuations, that they were far from disagreeable to her.

Julia a second time examined her heart, and found it expedient to mention his importunities to her foster parents.

The baron and his lady in reply observed, they should urge nothing that they thought would be disagreeable to her; but if she should ever entertain a sentiment of affection for any one, they should not be at all displeased if *the choice* were to fall on the per-

son

son of whom she had just been speaking.

Julia replied, "In a case so interesting to her happiness, she should be guided solely by the approbation of her benefactors."

Nothing conclusive could be obtained from this reply; yet the baron and his lady were satisfied in the opinion that Osmond's suit would, in the event, be successful.

While Osmond was triumphing in the hopes of entirely gaining over the affections of Julia, the worthy Orlando was pining in anguish and despair.

All applications at the vicarage proved inefficacious. Monimia was fled, and he could get no information but what was doubtful and

 evasive,

evasive, such as served only more and more to confirm him in the opinion of her baseness and dishonour.

To increase his affliction, the baron was continually pressing on him the circumstance of his bestowing his affections on Miss Pearlby.

That lady had resided some time at the castle, but our hero had paid her no more than common respect.

The baron at length began to be quite mortified at his son's coldness, and at last reasoned with him in rather a peremptory style.

Orlando heard all with the profoundest respect, but yet with an unusual degree of gravity in his countenance.

At length he bowed to his father, and

and told him—"He had for ever made up his mind in that respect; that the baron must forgive him for being explicit in the affair; for, much as he respected Miss Pearlby, his regard for her would never exceed that of due friendship and esteem."

"Infatuated boy!" cried the baron, "must you refuse the greatest advantages, and for ever disturb the peace of your family for the misconduct of an artful girl! Be advised Orlando; it is essential to your interest—to your happiness—to attend to the connection I recommended."

"Far be it from me, sir, to contradict you in your opinion," exclaimed Orlando; "perhaps it is—but in my present state of experience, I can neither dissemble nor risk the matter to an uncertainty."

"Then, sir," cried the baron angrily, you are determined to bring ruin on us all."

Orlando immediately exclaimed---(the tear starting in his eye),---"Hear me, good sir, and, for Heaven's sake, acquit me of a design to make you wretched! I have at length determined on a point which, I hope, will at once conciliate all."

"What is your purpose, then," cried the baron, with a tone of surprise.

Orlando paused. At length giving his father a look of determination, yet respect, he replied---

"To embark in some foreign expedition, sir.

"Time,

" Time, and a different station, may, perhaps, do wonders!"

" Why should you be so rash?"

" From a wish, my dear sir, to restore the happiness of the family."

" My dear boy!" cried the baron, you alarm me; surely you will not so hastily make a sacrifice of yourself."

" I propose, good sir," answered Orlando, " what, I hope, will be for the best; and I solemnly pledge you my word, that, though I cannot marry in conformity to your request, I will never unite myself contrary to your wishes."

" Enough," exclaimed the baron, with a sigh; " since you are resolved, may Providence protect and send you safe *back* to your friends again!"

The baron retired from his son in a very dejected way.

He did not foresee the consequences his advice would produce, and was seriously alarmed at the dangers Orlando's intention would expose him to.

In fine, when he reflected on the fatal consequences that might ensue, all the fondness of an indulgent father rushed upon him, and he regretted he had proceeded so far in his injunctions.

In a dispirited way he soon after resorted to the baroness, and related to her the sudden inclination of Orlando.

She received the intimation with a mixture of surprise and sorrow.

Like

Like the baron, she little imagined that her son would proceed to such an extremity.

The baroness instantly conferred upon some plan to induce Orlando to relinquish his design; while the baron, concluding he had given a finishing blow to the happiness of the family, exhorted her to use every persuasion to accomplish that point.

She availed herself of the first opportunity to communicate her wishes to her son.

" She represented to him, that there was no necessity to take so rash a step in consequence of their importunities; that what was recommended was intended for his welfare; but that the baron and herself would, from that moment, abandon every hint or intreaty on the subject.

The

The baroness exerted all her eloquence with her son to dissuade him from his purpose, to all which he was not unmoved---it was a struggle he could hardly surmount---he said every thing to sooth his mother, and intimated, that nothing, but a perfect conviction that such a step only would restore the peace of the family, could induce him to become averse from her intreaties.

She now left him in tears, and retired to meditate on her son's alarming and precipitate resolution.

The baron had observed lately a more than usual intimacy between Osmond and his son.

The conduct of Osmond had, indeed, become so engaging at the castle, that each person became more and more solicitous of his company.

He

He had left off all that reserve and mystery in his behaviour, for which he had been remarked, and confined himself to the study of amusing those with whom he resided.

He had, indeed, a twofold motive for his specious conduct—a wish to succeed in his amour with Julia, and to disengage, as much as possible, the affections of the baron from his son.

The baron was now of opinion he could turn the intimacy, which subsisted between Osmond and Orlando, to advantage.

He therefore, in an interview with the former, exhorted him to exert his influence to persuade Orlando from his purpose.

Osmond assured the baron he would, with the utmost pleasure, attend to his

request;

request; but doubted his success, after the efforts which had been used. "And indeed, sir," continued he, "I would not recommend dissuading him from an event, which may operate to his advantage."

"What can be your motive?" said the baron, who thought there was something singular in the remark.

"I do not altogether wish him to go," cried Osmond; "it will be an event painful to us all; but, perhaps, such a step may operate more to your satisfaction, sir, than if he were to stay."

"There is something mysterious in your insinuations; I wish you would explain them."

"It is painful to me, sir," answered Osmond, in a tone of hesitation, "to betray

betray the conduct of my bosom companion; but indeed, sir,---(Here a tear started from his eye)---my friendship for Orlando will not suffer me to conceal a circumstance so detrimental to his interest and happiness."

"I am all impatience! Say quickly."

"Then, sir, Orlando has expressed to me his determination to renew his correspondence with Miss Pritchards the first moment he can meet with her."

"Amazement!" exclaimed the baron."

"My wish," resumed Osmond, "is to promote his happiness; and, I am sure, such a connection would destroy it for ever!"

"Unquestionably so," cried the baron;

baron; "and in such a case I can consent to any step that may produce a separation."

The conversation now ceased, as the baron appeared embarrassed and dejected; and Osmond quitted him, with the hopes of having rendered Orlando's departure decisive.

He now went in pursuit of his unhappy cousin, resolving to use all diligence to carry his favourite point in view.

Osmond found him sitting on a bank in deep study, at the bottom of the garden.

"My dear Orlando," cried Osmond, "I have had a long conversation with your father, who seemed, at first, very reluctant at your going; *but, knowing* how your mind was

bent, I got him at last to be quite reconciled to it. Not but that we shall all suffer at your departure, and, for my own part, time will be miserably vacant to me after such an event; still we ought to forbear our own advantages to advance those of our friends."

Orlando was pleased with his professions of friendship, and told him he should ever bear in mind a sense of his goodness.

"I have done nothing more," cried Osmond, "than what mere affection has prompted me to; and should, indeed, be happy to accompany you, if I had not some pressing concerns on my hands at present.

"At all events," concluded he, "I will see you to the very moment of your embarkation."

The

The two friends walked slowly to the house, in a very social discourse. Orlando, impatient for his departure, was quite pleased at the introduction of the subject, and was not a little delighted with his cousin's remarks and assurances on the subject.

Osmond inwardly exulted in the success of his endeavours.

It was his aim to spread mischief as wide as he could in the family, and he thought it no mean atchievement in having accomplished his designs on his relative, in more respects than one.

Orlando's departure fed him with high notions of engrossing the baron's whole favour to himself; besides which, the fall of our hero, during his expedition, filled him with a variety of very *pleasing* sensations.

The

The baron and baroness, in the midst of their trouble, could not help ruminating a little further on the situation of Osmond and Julia.

The latter, from a principle of conformity to their wishes more than an impulse of love, had submitted to Osmond's assiduities.

They had not viewed her conduct in this light, but thought Julia's submission to be the effects of a real attachment, and considered an union between them as a decided point.

Julia's sense of duty and gratitude in this instance became a snare to her, for though she entertained some little partiality for Osmond, she was not aware that they had taken it up in so serious a light.

Julia was alarmed when she found

that Osmond had proceeded so far as to make proposals to the baron and baroness; and, in a state of perplexity, resorted to them to express her surprise at such a measure, and to beg they would not put a decisive construction on any part of her conduct hitherto.

The baroness desired her not to be alarmed at the affair; that she should always be mistress of her own choice on such occasions; but confessed herself inclined to favour Osmond's advances, had they been agreeable to her. "Both the baron and myself," continued the lady, "had formed the most flattering ideas on the event of your being united."

While they were in discourse the baron entered, and, catching a word or two, thought the business was settled,

settled, and began to congratulate Julia on the occasion.

Julia was not disposed in a direct manner to confront the baron, and modestly replied, " So important an affair, sir, requires time to deliberate."

" Aye, most assuredly it does, cried he, retiring, " still it is not a little pleasure to anticipate the event."

" There now, Julia," exclaimed the baroness (as the baron left the room), " did I not tell you, that he entertained the strongest wishes in this affair. Use your own pleasure, my dear; but if you can reconcile your mind to the proposals of Osmond, it will be conforming to a point in which we are both not a little interested."

CHAPTER III.

ORLANDO, after deliberating some time on the capacity he should assume, at last resolved upon taking up a commission.

This thought occurred in consequence of his having been informed, that there was a vacancy in a regiment a few miles off, which was ordered upon foreign service.

Soon as he was made acquainted *with* this circumstance, he repaired to

to his father and mother, and announced to them the opportunity.

The tears fell from them when they saw him determined, and the baron, notwithstanding Osmond's intimation, would gladly have persuaded him to stay.

Orlando felt great emotion at the affliction of his parents, and was almost on the point of relenting, when a sense of glory and his present unhappy state operated so strongly upon him, that he, in a word, declared his resolve was final.

He then endeavoured to calm their minds by representing their fears as chimerical, and that he had no doubt a kind Providenec would restore him safe to their arms.

Our hero had the satisfaction to

observe his attempts had the desired effect. He left them considerably more resigned to his undertaking, and that very day took up a commission.

Osmond, soon as he understood this affair was settled, flew to Orlando and took upon him such a countenance of concern, and regret, that the latter, whom we shall now call Captain Bellgrove, mistook for an incontestible evidence of friendship and affection, and, embracing his relation, hoped that Osmond would favour him with frequent accounts of the welfare of his dear friends at the castle.

Osmond replied, that he should experience the utmost satisfaction in making frequent communications with him, and urged a second time his wish to accompany Captain Bellgrove as far as opportunity would

permit. This

This was a proposal which the latter embraced with pleasure, having the truest esteem for his relation, who was, in every point of view, totally undeserving of it.

Shortly after the time arrived for Captain Bellgrove's departure, and the interview of separation between him and his parents was such as would have affected the most obdurate spectator.

The tears fell plenteously down the cheeks of the venerable baron, and the baroness was too much overcome for utterance; and, when the loud thundering peal of the drums assailed her ears, she turned pale and fell into the arms of her attendants.

In the mean time Julia exhibited very great affection for the son of her foster parents; she advanced towards

him, and (with the most affectionate look, the tear trembting in her eye, and her breast heaving with distress), exclaimed—" Pray, Capt. Bellgrove, do not forget your old companion."

The Captain embracing her, said—" Her concern for him gave him inexpressible satisfaction, and that he should always retain a brotherly love and esteem for her."

The villagers surrounding the castle were all collected, not merely for the circumstance of seeing the soldiery, but from a grateful and fond desire to take a parting look at their favourite; and, as the regiment approached, a general cry was heard of—" Here comes the noble Captain!"

There was not a spectator that did not seem interested in our hero's departure.

The

The poor cottagers took off their hats as he passed and saluted him. The women held up their children to view him; and a general exclamation of--"God send your honour a speedy and safe return," resounded from all parts of the throng.

"As our hero passed through the adjacent towns, the ladies from the windows brandished their white handkerchiefs in token of their esteem.

All this made a very interesting scene in his mind, and, upon any other occasion, he would have exulted in the repeated tributes of affection he had witnessed; but a croud of reveries which then occupied his mind, abated considerably his triumph on the occasion.

Amongst the many who felt distress previous to Orlando's departure, we

 must

must not forget the concern of his old servant Peter.

This faithful character had long been uneasy at the visible alteration of his young master, and having met with a suitable opportunity, where he thought he should give no offence, repaired to condole with him on the occasion.

Orlando was not displeased, but treated his venerable domestic with the greatest respect.

From the kind reception he met with, Old Peter took an opportunity one day, while his master was arranging matters previous, to his departure, to pay him a visit on the subject of his expedition.

"I am come," cried the old man, with tears in his eyes, "to make a

proposal

proposal to your honour, in which I hope I shall not be disappointed."

"Mention it, my good friend," cried Orlando.

"My good master, then," said Peter, "I am almost broken hearted at your going abroad; you will forgive my freedom, sir, I must venture a little familiarly in a case like this---I wish you would have the goodness to accept of my services, and to take me with you in your campaign."

"Why, this is a generous proposal, indeed; but surely, Peter, you have not counted the cost of such an undertaking: war is ever attended with danger, and also with unremitting labour and fatigue."

"True, sir," cried Peter, "I have reflected on these things; but though,

at my time of life, I may not be able to do what a young man can, I might yet be of some little use to your honour."

"Do not press upon me what I could never be so unfeeling as to consent to---No, no, Peter, a person of your description merits well to enjoy the decline of life in serenity and repose."

"Will you not hear me then, sir," exclaimed the worthy domestic, with a sigh?

"I am proud, believe me, of this instance of your attachment to me," cried Orlando to his servant; "but I have no inclination to expose your aged limbs to the hazards and dangers of a battle.

"Postpone the matter till I return, and

and then I shall know how to value properly your present instance of esteem and attachment."

The faithful old man now quitted his young master, not a little disappointed at the refusal, yet somewhat pleased at Orlando's assurances of employing him on his return.

The detachment which our hero commanded, after a quick day's march, halted at about twenty miles distance; Osmond, on every occasion, appeared extremely officious to attend on his friend, and the captain was equally as solicitous to serve him, though from motives perfectly sincere.

Osmond soon found an introduction to the officers of the regiment, and the captain was not a little pleased at the great attention shewn to his relative.

Orlando felt a little restraint at first in his new situation; but as he was one who could easily assimilate the manners of the company he was in, he soon acquitted himself to great advantage, and was complimented by the corps, who admired his ease and affability, and at the same time assured him, that his present dress would soon sit as easy on him as on any veteran in the regiment.

The next day our hero resumed his post, and the regiment took their route with a quickened pace, as they had only three days march to the place of embarkation, and knew not how soon they might receive orders to sail.

Nothing of any consequence transpired until they arrived at the place of destination in the early part of the evening; and the officers were not a

little

little delighted on hearing there was to be a ball in the town in the course of the evening.

Our hero, at the request of his brother officers, accompanied them in a lounge through some of the streets, at the end of one of which a croud was assembled upon some frivolous occasion.

While the officers pushed on, in hopes of clearing a passage, one of them exclaimed---

" D---n me, Jack, if there is not one of the finest women I ever saw--- she is a perfect angel, by G---d !"

His companions now cast their eyes towards the spot---and one of them bursting into a laugh, cried---

" Look how attentive the parson is

to

to her, ah! ah! ah!---Gentlemen of that cloth, I see, can stick close to a beauty as well as ourselves: that's right, my buck in black, don't lose sight of her for a moment!"

At the sound of parson, Orlando withdrew his attention from another quarter, and was on the point of noticing the object of his comrade's diversion, when, the croud suddenly dispersing, he was diverted from his purpose.

His relation, Osmond, who had been to examine more particularly the reason of the croud, now came up, and with a pale countenance and trembling limbs requested him to return to the inn, as he was taken suddenly ill.

The true cause, indeed, of his indisposition was no other than a discovery of the beautiful Monimia, the

same

same lady the officers were commending so highly at the window.

Osmond saw with the utmost chagrin the whole of his schemes on the point of being frustrated; a circumstance, which threw him into an agitation, and set him upon concerting means to withdraw the captain entirely from that quarter, in which appeared the object of his alarm.

The gentlemen, soon after their return, prepared for the assembly; and Osmond, whose illness now was pretty well subsided, talked of their approaching amusement with the greatest gaiety.

Our hero chose the dress of the profession he had assumed, and really exhibited a very fine person in regimentals.

He

He was rather above the middle stature, his limbs were proportioned to an exactness, he moved with a grace and dignity; his countenance was prepossessing to the highest degree, and the features of it moulded with the most perfect regularity; he had an eye which at once bespoke benevolence and affability; his address was truly captivating, and his manners insinuating to a very great degree.

In fine, Captain Bellgrove exhibited a model of human perfection, both in a bodily and in a mental point of view.

When our hero entered the ball-room, the eyes of the whole company were upon him, and many a female heart palpitated with the hopes of becoming his partner.

Osmond and Orlando soon took

different stations in the room.

The former joined himself to a party of the officers, who were in conversation about some remarkable object in the room; and the latter confined his discourse, for the moment, solely to a gentleman who belonged to the regiment, and who had just joined it, after leave of absence for a few weeks.

Our hero was particularly happy in the company of his new companion, who was, indeed, no other than an old school-fellow, the identical one who so nobly offered to suffer in his stead, and who was altogether a youth of a noble, ingenuous, and benevolent heart.

While Osmond was parading the room in search of beauty and attraction, his eye encountered an object

which operated like a stroke of electricity upon him.

This was no other than the lovely Monimia, escorted by the doctor and a young gentleman of interesting appearance, with whom she alternately held a conversation.

He was never thrown into such a state of confusion before. The affair had disconcerted him to the greatest degree. His invention was at the rack to find out means of preventing an interview between Orlando and the lady, which would at once crush all his hopes and expectations.

His finesse, however, soon suggested a stratagem.

Knowing that the doctor was completely disgusted with the family, he thought the most likely way to oblige him

him to retire would be to attempt a conversation with him.

With instantaneous effrontery he directed his way to that part of the room where Monimia was standing, and walking up to the doctor, saluted him with an air of rude familiarity, at which the latter recoiled and made him a very cold reply.

At this instant Monimia turned pale and would have fallen to the ground, if the young gentleman by her side had not caught her in his arms.

This circumstance soon produced a commotion in the room, and brought a croud about the person indisposed, among whom were our hero and his companion.

No sooner had Osmond observed him approach, than he caught hold of

his

his arm and endeavoured to divert his attention from the croud, saying—"It was nothing more than a young girl who was troubled with hysterics." But the bustle now moving on towards the spot they stood in, Orlando caught a glimpse of the ailing person, and immediately recognised the features of his Monimia.

He stood upon no ceremony, but, forcing himself through, accosted the doctor with the utmost good-nature; and, turning to the gentleman who supported Monimia, exclaimed—"Allow me, sir, to relieve you of your office, if you please."

The gentleman turned round with an air of surprise, mixed with disdain, and replied—"You must not, indeed, intrude now; if you have any business with the lady, choose, I beg, another opportunity."

"Business,

" Business, sir," cried Orlando with indignation, " it is the business of every one to assist a suffering female."

A parley now ensued, in which much contempt and even invective was bestowed on both sides.

In the midst of the scuffle, Osmond came up, and, pulling Orlando suddenly by the arm, rescued him from the assault which was about to be made on him by a stranger, who appeared on the part of Monimia's companion.

Our hero was employed some minutes in explaining his conduct to his companions; when, suddenly rushing forward to join in company with his distressed fair one, he found she was gone, and accompanied by the gentleman he had just had the altercation with. Osmond

Osmond still kept close to his relative, and was not a little pleased to find the parties had quitted the room.

Our Machiavel now thought it an excellent opportunity to give a finishing close to the business, and, snatching his hat, exclaimed at the same time --" That, as the state of his cousin's mind would not permit him to follow, he would go and give Orlando a minute description of their abode," and hurried immediately out of the room.

The gaiety of the ball-room was much deadened by this event, and it was some time before the dance commenced again.

The agitation of our hero's mind, and his ardent impatience for the return of Osmond, rendered him unfit *to partake* in the amusement around *him*. He

He intimated a wish to Fitzherbert to retire, which was consented to, and they both betook themselves to an adjoining room to discourse over a bottle about the incident that had happened.

Osmond did not return for nearly three hours after he left them, and Orlando's chagrin was inexpressible when he learnt that not the least tidings were to be gained of the retreat of the doctor and Monimia.

"Death and fury!" cried the disappointed lover, "what an opportunity have I let slip!" and, darting from his chair, exclaimed—"by Heavens! if she is within the circle of twenty miles I will find her."

Osmond intreated him to be composed, observing, "It would be to no purpose to seek for her, as he was

informed, just before he came in, that the doctor and his daughter had departed, in a chaise and four, almost immediately after quitting the room, and left no notice whatever of the route they meant to take.

"How singularly unfortunate," cried Orlando, (striking his forehead with rage); "stupid, insensible wretch!" exclaimed he, "to let any consideration deprive me of an interview! but I thought for the moment, that this town was Monimia's place of residence."

"He now sat himself down in a state of agony and despair, and at length, by the continued importunities of his friends, gave up all hopes of seeing Monimia, the sight of whom had raised in him all the love and tender sensations he had formerly entertained,

tained, notwithstanding the prejudices report had raised against her.

Osmond and the young officer tried every means to solace their afflicted companion, and the latter reasoned in so sensible a way, as served, in some measure, to abate the chagrin which oppressed him; nevertheless he retired to bed in a heavy and dejected manner.

In the dead of night Orlando was roused by an uncommon noise.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR hero was awakened by a voice conveying the sweetest sound, exceeding even melody itself, and which repeated his name three times in a tone, which, to his ear, was exquisite and ravishing.

It was, as he thought, the voice of his beloved Monimia, and, when he awoke, he listened with the fondest impatience for a repetition of the sound.

He kept in expectation some time, but

but all was still and silent as the tomb.

Cruelly bereft of this enchanting sound, he at length relapsed into a sleep, when the same angelic accents arrested his attention, and created in his mind the most endearing sensations, in the midst of which he awoke and found the whole but the illusion of a dream.

Orlando tried to compose himself to sleep again, in hopes of a repetition of the bliss, but in vain; a croud of disconsolate ideas took possession of him, and his restlessness increased to such a degree, that he started from the bed and would have walked about the room, but the profound darkness that then reigned disappointed him.

. In a fit of restlessness he repaired to bed again, where he had not been

long before his fancy was engaged in a scene of the most blissful and interesting appearances.

The beautiful Monimia appeared to him, but in a woe-worn and disconsolate figure.

Her countenance was pale and languid, and her looks denoted sorrow and inquietude.

She gazed at him with an air of tender reproof. Monimia then advanced towards him in an agony and agitation, and Orlando stretched forth his hands to embrace her.

At that moment a horrible fiend appeared and intercepted his design.

Her shrieks, when the hideous monster grasped her in his horrid *fangs*, roused Orlando to desperation.

tion. He made a furious attack on the invader of his happiness, but the demon was invulnerable.

On a sudden the clouds began to gather, and soon an awful darkness ensued, which entirely obscured Monimia from his sight.

He ranged about in a sort of phrenzy, while his ears were assailed with the most dismal tones and howlings.

Just as Orlando was on the brink of despair, a ray of heavenly light appeared, which soon after increased to a blaze of celestial splendour, and Monimia, attired in the richest robes, with a smile of ineffable delight in her countenance, approached, and, in a tone the most exquisite and tender, exclaimed---"Orlando! my Orlando! receive your injured Monimia!"

Orlando sprung forward with extacy, and, unmolested, took her to his arms.

Immediately soft music charmed their ears, a host of angelic choristers surrounded them, and, while they were chaunting the names of Orlando and Monimia, our hero suddenly awoke.

Orlando lay some time entranced in the extacy his dream had occasioned him.

The tender and endearing impressions left on his mind produced a heavy sigh, and he burst forth into an agony of anguish and regret---" She is innocent! my Monimia is innocent! and, by all the sacred powers, this moment I will seek and protect her!"

So saying, Orlando sprung from the

the bed, hurried on his clothes, and flew to Osmond's apartment.

The first tap brought his relation to the door, and Orlando was not a little surprised on beholding him already dressed and seemingly prepared for a journey.

This sudden and unexpected meeting threw them both into amazement.

Osmond explained---"That, hearing a bustle in the adjoining room, he thought Orlando was seized with illness, and was at that moment coming to his assistance."

While Osmond was entering into this description, he observed the hurry and impetuosity of Orlando's countenance, respecting which he was about to enquire, when the latter suddenly exclaimed, with a wildness in his

looks, " Osmond, I have seen Monimia! yes, I have beheld her bewitching countenance!"

Osmond recoiled a few steps at this assertion; he looked confused!

" Prepare, instantly prepare," continued Orlando, " to accompany me; I am upon the wing to follow my angel, and confess the wrongs I have done her!"

Osmond knew not how to account for this strange and disordered countenance of his friend; but, as if it was intended as a message of vengeance for his insidious conduct, he felt all the confusion a guilty conscience could produce on such an occasion.

In a stammering tone he exclaimed ---" You are not well, sir; pray try the effects of another hour's repose."

The

The clock now struck three. "You hear, sir," cried Osmond, "the time is yet early, and you stand in need of rest to qualify you for embarkation."

Just as they were entering into a parley, a bustle and confusion was heard below.

Orlando threw up one of the windows, and, by the light of torches, could observe a number of people, all flocking in one direction, and in the noise and murmur that prevailed, he could distinctly hear the sound of "fire!"

In a little time an immense column of flame with a cloud of smoke issued through the roof of a house, not far off, which, in its present appearance, threatened dreadful ravages.

Orlando having recovered from the

temporary delirium the dream had occasioned, and, ever prompt to offices of humanity, flew to the spot.

He began making his way through the croud, and soon witnessed a scene which called forth his feelings to render assistance, however hazardous the undertaking.

In one of the upper rooms appeared a lady in imminent danger and distress. The flames were making a very rapid progress, and threatened, in a short time, to demolish the whole building, while this unfortunate female was screaming in the most affecting manner for assistance.

Our hero was overjoyed at the sight of a ladder which was reared against the house; and while he was eagerly attempting to approach for the purpose of rescuing the lady, one of his brother

ther officers, with admirable dexterity, ascended to the window, and in his arms bore down the agitated and trembling fair one.

Orlando rushed forward to salute the author of this gallant exploit, and was agreeably surprised to find the lady's protector no other than the heroic and accomplished Fitzherbert.

He had scarce congratulated the lady on her fortunate preservation, when the roof of the house fell in and covered the premises with ruins.

Such a catastrophe naturally caught the immediate attention of all the spectators, and our hero did not perceive, till he had recommenced his discourse with the lady, that it was Julia, his adopted sister at the castle.

At the same moment Julia recog-

nized

nized his features, and instantly exclaimed—" Oh, Heavens ! Mr. Bellgrove, your father and mother ! ! !"

Orlando heard no more, but fled with the utmost precipitation in search of his parents, and, after running about in various directions, he found they had taken refuge in the very inn where he was quartered.

Here he discovered them suffering under the effects of the alarm.

The baroness was in a swoon, from which, however, she soon recovered, and on sight of Orlando, expressed the greatest joy and satisfaction.

The baron also shook his hand with heart-felt delight.

They now manifested the strongest *symptoms* of uneasiness about Julia ; but

but our hero at once calmed their apprehensions by relating what he had witnessed but a little time back.

While he was congratulating his parents on their safety, Julia, accompanied by Fitzherbert, arrived. They had been enquiring in many places for the baron and his lady, till at last they heard of the objects of their pursuit being at the inn where the officers were quartered.

Julia flew to embrace the baroness, who, with the baron, received her with the greatest joy.

He now turned to Fitzherbert, with whose interesting person and figure he was much charmed; and, viewing him as the preserver of his favourite, saluted him in terms of respect and admiration.

The

The baroness was no less an admirer of this noble youth, next to the heroic atchievement he had accomplished; she saw in him an open and ingenuous disposition, joined to a pleasing and winning affability; in short, the same happiness of temper which made him so resemble her son Orlando.

Fitzherbert was, therefore, received with the most flattering testimonies of respect, and the company soon after sat down to a very social breakfast.

The baron having thoroughly recovered himself, on a sudden enquired for Osmond, whose absence seemed to occasion him a degree of concern, and Orlando betrayed something of the same nature, when he informed his father, that he had seen nothing of his cousin since the alarm.

The

The baron was not at all easy on this affair. Apprehending something serious had befallen him, he gave immediate orders, that the strictest enquiry should be made for him throughout the town.

After their repast the ladies retired, and Fitzherbert, to accommodate his friend in any private conference he might choose with his father, made his apology, and in a little time withdrew.

The baron now explained to his son the reason of their paying him a visit at the place of embarkation.

"Your departure," continued he, "had so distressing an effect upon your mother, that she grew sick and refused all food, and spent her time in the most solitary, desponding manner.

"Pained to the heart at the melancholy alteration, I suddenly thought of the expedient we have adopted, and got ready our travelling equipage with immediate dispatch.

"The baroness was astonishingly recovered at my proposal, and observed, that she should be composed after seeing you once more before you embarked.

It was twelve o'clock when we arrived, so that we gave up all hopes of seeing you then, and retired to bed somewhat fatigued with travelling.

"Before I had well finished my first sleep, I was awoke with a commotion and bustle in the house, and the cry of "fire" soon induced us to use all preparation we could to escape.

"In

" In the midst of our confusion we were speeding to Julia's apartment, when the smoke and vapour increased to such a degree, that we were obliged to hurry down stairs in the most imminent peril of our lives.

" The moment we quitted the house our apprehensions for Julia were revived, and we felt all the horrors of supposing she was become a victim of the devouring flames.

" While the baroness and I were standing in an attitude of torture and suspense, some gentlemen came up, and by their kind intreaties and assurances of the lady's safety, persuaded us to take refuge in this house."

The baron had just finished his story when Fitzherbert returned, bearing a smile on his countenance, and, saluting his friend, exclaimed—

"Joy with me, Bellgrove!—A reprieve! a reprieve!—A friend of mine is arrived, and brings word from the War-office, in which he holds a high and lucrative situation, that we do not embark till the 25th, which you know will allow us time to look about us before we go. I suppose we shall have, in a very little time, official orders to that effect."

Fitzherbert had scarcely spoken these words, when a packet arrived, fully confirming what he had just intimated.

The baron was highly delighted with this intelligence; and, overflowing with a desire to communicate it to the baroness, that lady, accompanied by Julia, entered the room.

The eyes of the young ensign were rivetted on Julia soon as she made her appearance. This

This was, indeed, not at all surprising; having just recovered from her alarm, and decorated herself for the day, she appeared an angel in human shape.

Fitzherbert was captivated at the sight. Her cheeks, which, during the affright, were pale and wan, now were ornamented with a fascinating bloom---not the force of art, but the genuine tinge of nature! She looked all sweetness, and carried with her so bewitching an air, as excited love and admiration in the beholder.

Fitzherbert gazed in raptures; and, when he had feasted his eyes a moment or two on her charms, with the most winning gallantry, congratulated the ladies on their recovery.

An agreeable conversation now took place, during which the baron an-

nounced

nounced to Julia and the baroness, Orlando's counter-orders for a few days longer.

The baroness burst into a strain of joy on the occasion, and her young female friend manifested some very lively sensations on the report

The day was spent in harmony and mirth: and, in the course of the evening, Orlando invited his brother officers to supper, which, by the baron's direction, was ordered for their entertainment.

The baron and his lady were highly pleased with the conviviality that passed at this little festival, where both wit and sentiment prevailed, unaccompanied with any noisy, tumultuous instances of diversion.

The ladies received the most polite

and flattering attention of the gentlemen, who were, indeed, the ornaments of a military life---characters who idolize female charms and attractions, but who know how, at the same time, to value them with proper respect and veneration.

The time fled too rapidly for our travellers; day after day passed in quick succession, and that on which the heros were to embark was approaching fast—a circumstance which the baron and baroness looked to with concern, and even poor Julia felt some sensations of dejection at the thoughts of it.

[Our Readers will, very probably, anticipate the cause; but lest that, indeed, should not be the case, we think it proper to acquaint them, that Orlando was not the only person whose welfare and happiness she was particularly interested in.]

To

To say the truth, an affair of a very tender nature had taken place between Julia and Fitzherbert.

To the young soldier she was an irresistible figure, and he had seen enough of her mental attractions to make a powerful impression on his heart.

Julia, on her part, had felt a partiality for Fitzherbert the first moment she saw him.

This had increased, indeed, into a sentiment, or principle, which the most subtle sophist would find it difficult to distinguish from even love itself.

Thus affected, both parties found those hours the most pleasant which were spent in the company of each other.

Fitzherbert's

Fitzherbert's amiable qualities had gained him a footing in the baron's family like one of themselves, and, from his attachment to Julia and respect to those about her, he became as it were domesticated with them.

The baron and his lady were pleased with this proof of his respect for them, and they saw with delight the brotherly sociability between their son and a youth of such good qualities and attainments as Fitzherbert possessed.

They at the same time did not consider his attention to Julia in any extraordinary light, but looked upon it only as the effusions of common place gallantry, for which military getlemen are become so eminent.

The day preceding that of our hero's departure, the two officers at-

tended the baron and his family in a walk about the town, where they amused themselves by visiting different shops, in which many little articles of fancy and ornament are disposed of; in this manner they entertained themselves the whole of the morning, and, after tea, Orlando and his friend conducted their company to a sort of musical fête, which they had contrived in a wood, about a mile or so from the town.

The spot they had selected was highly beautiful and romantic.

It was in the centre of a sloping wood, where the trees had so intwined their branches as to form a pleasing and commodious bower.

Around this happy retreat was placed a seat, which afforded a pleasant relief after the fatigue of ascending the hill. At

At the bottom of the wood a river took its winding course, and, by serving to increase the echo, rendered the spot admirably adapted for the force of fancy and musical effect.

Our party were in raptures at the beauties around them, and when the band, which was placed on a tuft of grass a small distance from them, struck up, they thought they had arrived in the regions of enchantment.

At times, when the music ceased, the softness of the air, the ripling of the current below, the sporting of the fishes, and the plaintive note of the turtle dove above them—all conspired to exhilarate and fascinate the soul.

How auspicious such a season to promote the tender passion!

Fitzherbert and Julia were in a

dream of delight! and often did the youth whisper soft accents into her ear, to which she listened with a timid air, though with inward satisfaction and delight.

The party regaled themselves in this delicious abode till near eleven o'clock, when they returned to the inn charmed with the pleasures of their excursion, which were, however, somewhat abated by the information, that every exertion had been used to discover Osmond, but without success.

In the morning, the loud peal of the drum struck a damp on the spirits of poor Julia, and awakened her to an alarm and apprehension which she little dreamed of a few weeks back; and Fitzherbert, notwithstanding the courage and fortitude natural to him, felt a heaviness on his spirits when it rallied him, in tones of thunder, to his departure. As

As the brightest summer's day is sometimes interrupted with sudden gloom and darkness, so the heaven of yesterday was now succeeded by clouds of pensive sorrow and dejection.

The baron and baroness were however, more composed than at the former parting, and took leave with a degree of firmness that evinced their hopes of a safe return.

A tear sparkled in Jula's eye at this second separation, and she even ventured to express her regret not only for Orlando, but also for his friend.

While the baron and his lady were occupied in a parting dialogue with their son, the gallant Fitzherbert exchanged a few tender whispers with Julia, and at the same time made her a present of his picture, which she

received with evident pleasure, and gave him a look denoting the high value she should always set upon it.

Interviews of separation become the more painful as they are protracted; of this the amiable party, of which we have been speaking, were highly sensible.

After a very cordial salute on all sides, the young heros repaired to their posts, and were soon on board the transport appointed to convey them to the place of destination.

CHAP.

CHAPTER V.

ALL day long did the image of their son occupy the thoughts of the baron and his lady, and they journeyed home to the castle insensible to any of the pleasing objects on the road.

Poor Julia participated not a little in their sorrow, but it proceeded from an additional motive.

The pleasing form of Fitzherbert had left an impression of tenderness on her mind, and she pondered over

those happy moments she had experienced in his company with a mixture of delight and sadness.

It was some time after their arrival at the castle before the baron and his lady could recover their usual cheerfulness. The absence of Orlando occasioned a dullness and insipidity in all their entertainments, at the same time the mysterious and unaccountable behaviour of Osmond assisted, not a little, to increase their inquietude.

They deliberated day after day upon the motives of his departure, and at length gave it up to time to develope the cause of a conduct as sudden as unexpected.

In the mean time Julia found her thoughts engrossed solely on a subject which she had neither inclination

nor

nor power to shake off. Her affection for the gallant youth often prompted her to survey his picture—a circumstance, however, though it excited a pleasing sensation at first, was accompanied with concern when she recollected her situation with respect to Osmond.

Julia found herself in a case of no small perplexity, and the more she gazed on the portrait the more she blamed herself for incautiously raising pretensions which now strongly militated against every idea in favour of Fitzherbert.

One day, as she was paying her devotion to the image of the young soldier, the baroness came into the room and nearly surprised her before she could conceal the portrait in her bosom.

A conversation soon arose and at length turned upon their late excursion—an incident which soon led to the introduction of Orlando's companion.

" Don't you think, my dear, that Ensign Fitzherbert is a handsome and agreeable man?" said the baroness.

" I think, madam," replied Julia, " that the gentleman is very well."

" I am very happy," continued the baroness, " that my son takes with him so valuable a companion, and shall rejoice at the opportunity of reminding so amiable a youth of his goodness when he arrives in England. I hope Orlando will not fail to bring him with him on his return."

Julia's heart fluttered when she heard this declaration, and she exclaimed,

claimed, with an artless and innocent satisfaction—" Dear me madam, we shall all be happy to see Mr. Fitzherbert again !"

The baroness now had gained her point.

She found herself not mistaken in the opinion she had formed, that Julia entertained a predilection for the young soldier.

This discovery at any other time would have disconcerted that lady, in no small degree, as frustrating the favourite plan and wish of both the baron and herself.

In the present case, however, the baroness felt no great alarm, as she knew time and absence were, in general, an effectual cure to sudden impressions.

About a month after the family had arrived at the castle, Osmond made his appearance, and was received by the baron and his lady with a mixture of surprise and satisfaction.

Their consternation at his extraordinary absence had urged them even to send a messenger to Horrordale, who was informed by one of the servants, that Osmond had not been at home for some time. Since that period they had given the matter up as strange and inexplicable; of course his now unexpected appearance created additional astonishment, and filled them with a desire to know the cause. At the same time the baron exclaimed --"Osmond, your absence cast a damp on our visit to Orlando."

"Your visit to Orlando, sir," cried Osmond, with surprise, "I never understood you intended any *such thing*. Nothing could have in-

duced

duced me to forego the pleasure of paying my respects to you, had I been aware of such an event."

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He now described the circumstance which so cruelly disappointed him in his intention of accompanying Orlando on board. . . . .

. . . .

"Just as I was in pursuit of Orlando, whom I had lost in the confusion which attended the fire, I was accosted by a stranger, who said my friend was returned home and waited for my arrival. I immediately accompanied the messenger through a lane, which he described as the nearest way to the inn; but had scarcely proceeded half way when three stout fellows seized me, and, putting a gag in my mouth, conveyed me on board a boat, which was immediately rowed to a place at some miles distant; after detaining me several days I was permitted to depart, the robbers using

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the precaution of putting a bandage across my eyes; they then delivered me to a guide, who conducted me to a certain spot, and, restoring me to sight, left me, but not without threatening the most dreadful vengeance should I offer to look back. I walked to the next town in the greatest alarm, where I procured a chaise upon representing my situation in life, and proceeded to Horrordale; on my arrival I was apprised of the messenger you had sent---a circumstance which prompted me immediately to pay you a visit."

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed the baron and baroness, "what a miraculous escape!"

They now congratulated Osmond with all the liveliness and zeal as if they had received him from the grave, and this insidious schemer found that he

he had hit upon a right plan to establish an ascendency in the family.

There was not, indeed, a word of truth in the whole of Osmond's narration.

The fact was, in seeking Orlando he encountered the presence of the baron —a circumstance that appeared so unexpected and extraordinary, as induced him to suppose a developement of his treachery had taken place. This opinion operated so powerfully, as prompted him to a precipitate retreat, and likewise induced him to keep in a state of privacy till he was fully convinced Orlando had left England.

Influenced by such views, he hesitated not a moment, and trusted to his ingenuity to account to the baron for his sudden and abrupt behaviour.

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We have noticed the event, and have still further to add, that this artful tale rendered him a greater favourite than ever with the baron and his lady.

Elated with his good fortune, Osmond levelled all his insinuation and address at Julia, for the purpose of becoming master of her affections, and persuaded himself that he should eventually be successful, though his present attempts were not received with that ardour he expected.

Poor Julia could not endure this persecution without much chagrin and uneasiness.

Osmond's importunities were now more disgusting to her than ever, and yet, conscious of the wishes of her benefactors, she struggled to make them agreeable to her; but, in this case, she was a poor hypocrite. Both

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the baron and baroness could perceive a visible constraint in her deportment to him.

For a considerable while was Julia tortured with contending resolutions on the subject; it was a struggle between love and duty.

The baron and baroness on every occasion favoured the suit of Osmond, while their amiable charge bestowed her whole thoughts upon Fitzherbert.

At length their repeated solicitations, and the many insinuating stratagems practised upon her by the perfidious Osmond, staggered her allegiance to the heroic youth, and, in an irresolute and undetermined manner, she consented to listen to the proposals of Osmond.

The baron and baroness were de-

lighted with this acquiescence, and, during a conversation some time after, they even hinted at a day to crown their hopes, which Julia listened to in a way that they considered as silent approbation, and solaced themselves accordingly with the idea that she would shortly become the happy bride of Osmond.

In the mean time the lovely maiden became a prey to the most uneasy sensations, and, in secret, indulged a melancholy highly injurious to her health; in a few weeks she was visibly altered, and her whole appearance became languid and declining.

During the struggle which Julia endured between love and duty, she would often repair to the cabinet which contained Fitzherbert's picture, and every time she gazed on it she thought it spoke reproof and admo-

nished her against the contract she was about to engage in; a sigh of regret always attended her meditations, and she would retire from the object of her contemplation with a heart ready to burst with sorrow and vexation.

Julia's declining state alarmed the baroness, who conjured her to divulge the cause, but the former was reserved and evaded all curiosity by giving a different turn to the discourse whenever it was introduced.

The baron, hurt at the unfavourable alteration in his favourite, studied many plans for her relief; at last he thought the air of Bath and the liveliness of the place would not a little contribute towards it, and in a conference with his lady, which took place immediately on the suggestion,

the following day was appointed for their departure for that place.

Julia, in the midst of her uneasiness, would often cast a thought on her friend Monimia, whom she loved sincerely, nor was it possible for any rumour, however degrading, to diminish in the least the esteem she held for her.

A tear fell from her when she reflected on the cruel separation of an amiable pair, whose kindred souls betokened them born for each other, and who, in her opinion, were made the sport and victims of some treacherous calumniator, though she knew not on whom to fix the imputation.

The endearing hours Julia had spent at the vicarage would often recur to her mind, and as she ranged

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the solitary walks about the castle, she sighed for the society of Monimia.

At no period would such an acquisition been more agreeable, as she had no friend now to whom she could impart the anguish of her heart.

The baroness, who was the usual repository of her particular concerns, could not be consulted to mitigate an affair she was decidedly in favour of.

Julia sighed in vain for her friend, whose situation was involved in such obscurity and uncertainty, as precluded every hope of an amicable restoration.

In the mean time Osmond was at a loss to account for the sudden change in Julia just at the period of his happiness; and his mind became dis-

turbed with the apprehensions of losing her for ever; in short, every interview seemed to threaten a most cruel disappointment to his wishes.

He, however, exerted every assiduity to divert her dejection, which, in addition to their intended change of situation, he hoped would in time restore her.

At the same time he was not a little pleased with the thoughts of accompanying a person of Julia's prepossessing appearance to a place of fashionable resort.

It fed his vanity considerably to exhibit himself as the protector of one whose bewitching figure he knew every body must admire.

He found himself, therefore, impatient for the arrival of the day that

would make him the happy man he so much wished to become.

They immediately prepared for their departure, and after a journey of three days arrived at that delightful city.

The air of Bath and the diversions of the place at length produced that effect on Julia which they anxiously hoped for; she recovered her bloom, her natural flow of spirits returned, and she appeared in the eyes of her friends to be on the eve of restoration.

The baron rejoiced to find his Julia the same happy companion as formerly, and, with her return to health, revived his hopes of her union with Osmond.

CHAPTER VI.

A FEW weeks after their arrival they paid a visit to the rooms, and Osmond took particular care to be as attentive to Julia as possible.

The eyes of all the company were fixed on her at her entrance.

Osmond triumphed in this flattering preference shewn his fair companion, though he secretly determined to frustrate every advance made to her, and it was not long before his *jealousy* was put to to the test.

Amongst the number of beaux that flocked about Julia, there was one that took particular pains to make himself observed by her; as she passed he directed a fixed and expressive look at her, and, turning suddenly round, endeavoured to get as near as he could to her; and, just as Osmond was directing his discourse to the baron and baroness in a leaning attitude, this gentleman made an attempt to supplant him in his situation —a circumstance which at once convinced Osmond of the nature of his design, and the latter began to prepare measures to disappoint him.

Julia had noticed the stranger's remarkable behaviour, and was not ignorant of the interest Osmond had taken in the affair.

To avoid any dispute, therefore, she took a seat between the baron and

his lady, who had retired to another part of the room. Just at this period it happened that the baron rose to pay his respects to an acquaintance who unexpectedly came up, and the stranger watching the opportunity, immediately placed himself in the chair.

Osmond, who kept an attentive eye upon him, could no longer refrain from reprimanding him for his rudeness, to which the other made no reply, but began to talk in a very familiar and disgusting strain to Julia.

Osmond in plain terms now told him to quit the room, upon which the stranger started up and attempted to seize him by the collar.

The place was now all in confusion. Julia fainted—the baron and baroness were alarmed to a great degree, and were led out of the room in a state of

dismay

dismay—while Osmond and his antagonist stole away to bring their dispute to an honourable decision.

The baron and his lady with Julia, who were not recovered till after various assiduities, returned home affected with the most uneasy apprehensions respecting Osmond.

He dispatched messengers in many different directions, but they all returned without any other intelligence, than that the two disputants were seen to quit the town, accompanied each by a friend.

The baron was now confirmed in his opinion, and endeavoured to prepare himself for some calamitous event.

While the family were brooding on the probable melancholy effects of the altercation, they were apprised of Os-

mond's arrival, and soon beheld him in a situation that shocked them to a very great degree. He lay stretched on a litter, and in that state was conveyed bleeding into the house.

The baroness fainted and Julia gave a piercing shriek, while the baron felt an indisposition at the sight which he was hardly able to sustain.

The wounded Osmond was now conveyed to his chamber, while they ordered instantly the most eminent assistance.

In a little time two surgeons of the first distinction made their appearance, who pronounced the injury to be of uncertain tendency.

Osmond in his dangerous situation received unremitting attention from the family he resided with.

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The baron was continually by his bed side, and his amiable lady and Julia assisted as his nurses with the most unwearied care and anxiety.

For several days the case appeared critical and dubious; at length more favourable symptoms succeeded, and in a little time he bid fair to regain his former vigour.

Julia's constant attendance on Osmond assisted not a little towards his recovery. She was, indeed, highly interested in such an event, as on her account he had hazarded his life—a circumstance which, more than any thing that had yet occurred, induced her to cast a favourable eye upon him.

One day, as she was standing by his bed side, Osmond hinted how

happy he should be could he requite her for all her pains and tenderness.

"Do, my dear Julia," continued he, "promise me your heart and then nothing can exceed my happiness."

Julia blushed and said, "She wished him much happier than his present state rendered him."

Osmond in faint accents urged his request; and Julia, pitying his feeble state, thought it not prudent to give a direct denial to his importunities.

The baron and baroness watched the symptoms of Osmond's malady with daily care and solicitude, till at length, to their unspeakable satisfaction, they beheld him so much recovered, that the following day was appointed for an airing.

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They retired to rest thinking on the pleasure the excursion would afford them; but were called up in the night with information that Osmond had experienced a relapse and lay in momentary danger of his life.

The baron repaired to his chamber and found him just recovering from a fit; immediate assistance was sent for, and when the physicians arrived, they pronounced that he could not live more than three hours.

The house was now in a state of general alarm; the baroness and Julia came with speedy steps into the apartment, expecting to witness Osmond's expiring moments; but when they approached the bed, they considered their attempt as vain, when they saw him lay in a state of insensibility, apparently a corpse.

For some time they watched him in a state of the most anxious suspense. At length, to their surprise, he languidly opened his eyes and appeared to move, and, after a short interval, ejaculated—" O Julia!"

Osmond struggled to proceed, but found himself incapable of so doing, and the company present, observing that their presence only incited him to efforts which he was too weak and feeble to perform, left him and retired to their respective apartments.

In the morning the baron and baroness, with Julia, repaired to his chamber with the expectation of beholding him in the most languishing state, but were agreeably surprised at finding the balance in his favour.

He was disposed to enter into a conversation with his friends, but the physi-

physicians forbade such an attempt till he was a little stronger, at the same time advised that he should be kept still and not be interrupted with visits, but such as were after long intervals.

In the course of a day or two Osmond had gained so much advantage over his illness, as to be able to converse a little, though in feeble accents.

His situation, however, appeared to his friends as very critical, and they had not the most sanguine hopes of his recovery.

A day or two afterwards, as the baron and baroness were sitting by his bed side, they observed an earnestness in his looks as though he wished to communicate some interesting and solemn event; upon which they both

used every flattering intreaty to encourage him to impart it.

Osmond, in a sort of gasp, articulated—" Julia!"

The baroness instantly flew in search of her, and they both attended with the persuasion of witnessing Osmond's dying moments.

This interview being considered as the last, the attendants of the room were ordered to withdraw, and the friends of Osmond ranged themselves in solemn expectation of what was soon to take place.

Osmond then, in a voice hardly to be understood, intreated Julia to pity him in his last moments and to allow him to hope, before he expired, that he possessed her affections.

Julia knew not what to say; at length her compassion for one who had sacrificed his life in her behalf, together with the expressive importuning looks of the baron and baroness, urged her to a reply somewhat favourable to his wishes.

"Believe me," cried the almost exhausted Osmond, "believe me Julia, your image is perpetually in my thoughts—the approach of death has not a pang equal to the idea of parting with you."

Here his utterance became impeded and he appeared to labour between life and death to continue his discourse.

Julia was all this while overpowered with concern and regret.

Osmond proceeded—"I feel death advancing with quick approach; O

that I could have one wish gratified, and then I could die happy!"

The baroness repeatedly urged him to name his request.

He now tried all his exertions to speak, and, placing his cold and trembling hand in Julia's, exclaimed ---" Say, adorable Julia! will you consent, before the vital spark is fled, to call yourself mine?

" Shall the priest attend, while I have power to articulate the ceremony, and unite us in indissoluble bands? I have only to hear you pronounce the solemn words, and then I die resigned and happy!"

He now sunk upon his pillow exhausted.

In the mean time the baron and

baroness used intreaties, with tears in their eyes, that Julia would favour the dying man's request.

The lovely maiden, overcome with pity and grief, and moved not a little with the solemnity of the scene, at length, in a hesitating tone and faultering accents, uttered something like a consent.

The baroness caught the fortunate moment and immediately gave orders for the attendance of a proctor, who in a few days procured a special licence.

In the mean time Osmond had acquired some little strength and exhibited daily much impatience for the performance of the ceremony which was to make him happy.

At length every preparation was com-

completed for this purpose, and the appearance of the clergyman was a complete evidence, that Julia had at last favoured his request.

A beam of joy sparkled in his countenance, and he appeared revived in a wonderful degree.

The minister, however, advised some short delay, that the sick man might collect sufficient strength to answer the responses.

An hour had elapsed when Osmond made signs that he was prepared and wished to begin the undertaking.

The parties all drew near, and just as the clergyman was about to commence the ceremony, a sudden convulsion seized Osmond; he started with a look of horror, and sunk on *his pillow*; then, opening his eyes,

he began raving in the most frantic manner---" Avaunt, thou dreadful spectre!---remove from my sight that ghastly countenance!---that bleeding breast and bloody dagger! !"---and then fell back in a trance.

The company present were all amazement---a dread and consternation seized them all on such an extraordinary event.

The baron and the ladies gazed on every part of the room, but could discern no form.

" It is, I have no doubt," cried the clergyman, " a distempered brain that causes these chimeras. We had better retire."

The ladies were about to obey the injunction, when Osmond suddenly revived and complained of giddiness, but

but earnestly intreated that the ceremony might not be delayed.

They were about to acquiesce, and the minister stood prepared with his book, when Osmond was attacked with a second fit, more violent than the first.

His whole frame shook---his eyes appeared starting from their sockets---his teeth chattered---and his countenance exhibited terror and dismay! ---At length he shrieked---"Look! ---it advances!---see its bloody and terrific form!---O, earth, hide me from its attack!"

He now fell back, and, as if dreading to look up, in a frantic manner covered himself over with the clothes.

The company present retired, not a *little disconcerted* at what had happened,

pened, but under the fullest conviction that Osmond's disorder had affected his brain.

The baron and his lady, however, thought it not a little singular, that the paroxisms should come on just at the crisis of his marriage. It was an affair that engaged them a long time in a very serious discourse; still they were unable to establish in their minds any fixed opinion concerning it.

The affair, however, made that impression on the mind of the baron, that he was determined, the first prudent opportunity, to discourse with Osmond on so surprising an event.

The same circumstance which had so disturbed the baron and baroness operated, in some measure, as a relief to Julia.

She was, it is true, not a little disconcerted at the strange conduct of Osmond; but it had released her from an engagement which her heart had, more than once, upbraided her for.

The image of Fitzherbert would steal into her mind at intervals, and though she had not pledged herself in any solemn asseveration to him, she could not justify herself in becoming Osmond's wife whilst the least predilection remained in her breast for another.

The next visit the baron and his lady made to Osmond, they found him altered for the better; his delirium had left him, and he appeared somewhat calm and composed.

Osmond, however, was not disposed for conversation; he appeared gloomy

gloomy and reserved, and answered his kind relatives with a petulance that nothing but his indisposition could have excused.

When Julia appeared his eyes assumed an unusual brightness; he looked at her with an excess of admiration, and exhibited something of a fierceness, which occasioned alarm to Julia.

He, however, was quite silent as to the ceremony he had been so importunate and solicitous about; said very little to Julia; but there was an inexpressible wildness about him when he gazed on her, that denoted she was the most predominant object of his thoughts.

In process of time Osmond acquired sufficient strength to walk about in his chamber; and one day, when the

baron was making towards his room, he was surprised with something like the sound of two voices in his apartment.

The baron paused, and still thought he heard Osmond in conference with a second person. This affair puzzled him, as he knew he had formed no acquaintance, of any sort, since his arrival at Bath.

The baron stood deliberating whether to proceed or return; at length he resolved upon gratifying his curiosity, and, opening the door, found him walking to and fro in a musing attitude.

"I was hesitating," cried the baron to Osmond, "whether I should interrupt your conversation."

"Sir!"

"Sir!" exclaimed the latter, with a look of surprise.

"I thought you had company with you," continued the baron.

"I am astonished at this remark," replied Osmond; "for, believe me, there has no living creature been in this room within the last hour besides myself."

He now sat himself down in great discomposure, which the baron attributed to the exercise he had used as well as to the conversation they were engaged in; he, therefore, advised him not to exert himself too much and to spare himself as much as possible in the latter point of view. The baron then withheld his discourse and took a turn to the window, where he amused himself with the different objects in view.

As he was standing at the window he saw a person busy in making enquiries of different people as he passed, at last distinguished the name of Osmond in the conversation, upon which the baron, without hinting a word of the matter, left the room and went in search of the enquirer; upon coming up with him, the baron informed him that he would conduct him to the person he wanted, and, stretching out his hand, offered to deliver the letter; but the bearer, in a rough tone, said, "He would trust it out of his hands to no one."

The baron was almost offended with his rudeness; but, taking a closer view of his physiognomy, he was not much surprised at his behaviour.

The messenger had a dark and gloomy countenance, and a ferocity in his looks that disgusted him, who thought

thought he had never beheld so forbidding and aspect.

The fellow soon found his way to Osmond's apartment, with whom he continued some time, and then took his departure in haste and precipitation.

The baron, with some degree of apprehension, betook himself to Osmond's chamber, supposing that some serious affair had happened, and hinted his fears in expectation of being informed the particulars; but the latter was quite reserved, and expressed no more than—"That urgent business required his presence at Horrordale."

The baron advised him, if possible, to postpone his journey, alluding at the same time to his infirm state; but he was not one of those who readily gave up a point; he was inflexible in

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any thing that his mind was intent upon, and, therefore, persisted in telling the baron, " He could not, on any account, dispense with the summons he had received from Horrordale."

The baron was rather piqued at the sullenness of his nephew. He thought himself entitled to a share of his confidence; but the latter maintained such secrecy and mystery in his conduct, as though he thought his friends unworthy to be trusted with any part of his affairs.

This instance of coldness in particular appeared as no little proof of his indifference to the family; and the baron, more than once, thought he had unworthily bestowed his regard.

The baroness, when she was informed of the matter, sighed at the

thought

thought of his ingratitude, and was exceedingly chagrined when she reflected, that affection for her departed sister had produced a concern subversive of their peace.

The baron and his family did not reside long at Bath after the departure of Osmond; nor did they regret at all the leaving a place where they had witnessed such strange and disagreeable events.

The baron likewise found it expedient to take his departure suddenly, from a circumstance which had occasioned an unpleasant check upon their amusement.

In the same house resided a gentleman who had been remarked for bestowing particular notice on Julia, though he had not, as yet, expressed

any thing more than a civil compliment to her.

No sooner, however, had Osmond departed, than Mr. O'Shillingham became very assiduous in his advances.

This modest gentleman had contrived to insinuate himself into the baron's notice, and had once or twice drank tea with the party, so that he now thought himself entitled to the common freedoms of the family, and was determined to make the best use of his time under such advantages.

Unfortunately for O'Shillingham, he was destitute of those personal advantages which many of Hibernian extract pride themselves upon, and was, indeed, a man of a very disgusting visage, such as denoted great haughtiness and inhumanity. He, *however*, could assume every cour-

teous grace and accent when they promised success to his designs.

Julia felt a great aversion to this adventurer at the first, and now that she became incessantly teased with his importunities she downright hated him. He, however, was not of a school to be daunted by a few rebuffs, but increased in his addresses to her.

O'Shillingham, notwithstanding the coldness he perceived, became quite easy and familiar in the family. Indeed, gentlemen of this description have a wonderful facility in appropriating the substance and advantages of others to their own account; or, in other words, making themselves quite at home every where.

He resorted to the baron's apartments when ever he chose; sat down

at his table at almost every meal; assumed the dictatorship in every discourse, and even attempted to direct the baron's domestic arrangements.

To such a length did he carry his freedoms, and that in so short a time, that the baron found it highly expedient to shake off the effrontery of this bold intruder; and when he reflected on O'Shillingham's unceasing overtures to Julia, he thought it no longer safe to be under the same roof with him.

The baron had almost from their first intimacy imbibed a very unfavourable idea of his disposition.

This arose from a circumstance which took place one day in their walks; O'Shillingham usually kept about him a beautiful little spaniel, which

which would fawningly attempt to follow him in all his excursions: It happened however, once, that he shewed a great dislike to the animal's inclination in this respect, and drove him back in anger; the fond creature sneeked reluctantly away; but his attachment to his master was such, that, after a little time, he returned and renewed his caresses; this act of disobedience so enraged the unfeeling O'Shillingham, that he flew to him in a rage, and, fastening a string with a stone about his neck, proceeded to throw him into a brook close by.

The baron and baroness intreated him to forbear, and Julia even implored him to spare the faithful little creature; but the remorseless tyrant was inexorable; and, uttering a curse, consigned the unfortunate victim to a watery grave.

Julia shuddered at the action, and her foster parents conceived no good opinion of a man so void of feeling and humanity.

It was no small satisfaction to the baron, in the midst of his apprehensions, to hear Mr. O'Shillingham announce his intention of visiting a friend of his, a few miles off, at whose house he meant to reside a day or two.

Instantly the baron resolved on measures accordingly, and secretly intimated to his family, that he should take his departure the same day.

Great secrecy was observed on the part of him and his family, so that O'Shillingham took his leave, apparently without an idea of their intention; and the former a few hours after set out, as was reported, for Tunbridge Wells.

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The privacy with which this journey was conducted, and the caution the baron used in all his arrangements to evade pursuit, assisted considerably to relieve his mind; so that when they had travelled a few miles on the road, both the baroness and himself were nearly freed from their apprehensions.

At a certain distance he ordered the drivers to strike into a road that deviated a great deal from that they were pursuing, and in the course of the day they had proceeded many miles from the track they reported to be their intended route.

The following day they continued their journey, and were not a little pleased with having met with no interruption on the road. At the close of the day they were within a few miles of their destination; and the

baron was entertaining the ladies with many diverting anecdotes, such as suited the state of the evening, which was now become nearly dark, or rather darkness visible.

The baron at this time directed the drivers to use speed, and was about to recommence some lively discourse, when three or four horsemen rode furiously up to the carriage and ordered the chaise boys not to proceed, observing at the same time, that their refusing to comply would be at the risk of their lives. They then opened the door of the coach, when the baron, taking them for robbers, instantly offered them his watch and money.

Julia shrieked, and the baroness intreated that the assailants would do them no violence, offering her purse at the same time; but plunder was

not their object; they spurned at both the offers, and, seizing Julia, with violence bore her off, regardless of the cries and supplications of the company she was in. Having effected this, they presented pistols at the drivers and told them to go off at full speed.

Nothing could exceed the affliction of the baron and his lady at this alarming outrage; they proceeded in the deepest dejection the few miles left of their journey to Tunbridge Wells; at the same time suffering the most dreadful apprehensions concerning the fate of Julia.

The baron, on his arrival, raised every alarm in the town; a strong party was sent in pursuit, and some little hopes were entertained of their success, as the distance was small to the place where the affair had hap-

pened. They, however, returned without having discovered the smallest track of the ruffians!

The night was solitary and dreary to the benevolent pair—uneasiness and alarm kept them, the greater part of it, awake—and, when they reclined into a slumber, it was accompanied by dreams of terror and affright!

In the morning they caused a description of the assault and the figure of the villains to be inserted in the county papers, and also circulated various hand-bills with the offer of a considerable reward for the recovery of the lady, or the apprehension of the offenders.

The baron and his lady waited at this place some days with anxious hopes of procuring some tidings of their lost favourite; but, not being

gratified

gratified in their wishes in that time, they, with heavy hearts, resolved upon ret[illegible] to the castle.

CHAPTER VII.

WE shall now lay before our Readers the particulars of a plot concerted at Bath, and which was completed in the carrying off of Julia.

We took notice of the sudden departure of Osmond from that place, and were led to suppose that it was to settle some affairs of importance at Horrordale Castle; but, in reality, he had at that time a very different concern upon his hands; this was no other than to get into his possession the person of the lovely Julia.

Ever

Ever since the awful interruption to his views of marrying her, he became [illegible] in his passion for her. [illegible] uffered [illegible] ar wh[illegible] d by a supernatural interposition to possess her in a lawful way, he became hardened and dissolute in his ideas, and resolved upon the most desperate measures rather than be denied the gratification of an abandoned purpose.

Osmond, upon his arrival at Bath, among other amusements resorted to the gaming table, where he picked up an acquaintance exactly suited to his mind, who was one of those characters that frequent places of fashion for the purpose of exercising their genius to advantage.

This gentleman had moved in various capacities; had acted as steward,

valet,

valet, pander, and even assassin, at different periods.

The very means which en[illegible]m to appear in his present style o[illegible]n-dour arose from his becoming accessary to the m[illegible]rder of a gentleman, of whose property he became no inconsiderable sharer.

He, however, was not satisfied with the spoil, but hied to Bath in hopes that the gaming table, with the assistance of the property he was in possession of, would enable him to figure away as a man of rank and fashion.

This, then, was the character Osmond soon commenced an intimacy with, and who very shortly became such a favourite with him, that the Lord of Horrordale soon trusted him with some of his most serious concerns.

Osmond

Osmond had endeavoured to procure Malvolio a footing in the baron's [illegible] t discovered, just as he was [illegible] t of doing so, that his uncl[illegible] acquainted with some part of this miscreant's history. He rejoiced, however, that no discovery was made of the connection between them.

Malvolio, notwithstanding his exclusion from the family, knew well the whole of the baron's affairs.

He was an adept at fishing out family expectations; besides which, he had the good fortune to be acquainted with a person in the town who had lived, for many years, not far from Bellgrove Castle, and had long known the individual concerns of that place.

This character he employed as a spy upon the baron, by contriving to get him a temporary servitude under his roof.

Malvolio had too much address to appear curious before Osmond respecting his relations, and [illegible] latter at length hinted [illegible] upon Julia, the former seem[illegible]ger to serve him, without betraying the least symptom of a similar inclination.

He was, in fact, a consummate fortune-hunter; was also a proficient in dissimulation, so that he appeared vastly zealous to serve Osmond, at the same moment that he determined to convert his exertions to his own advantage.

Malvolio was Osmond's second at the time the latter had the affair in the rooms; this was a circumstance that operated unfavourably towards the two friends, who were obliged to undergo a separation, or, what Osmond chose in preference, a few visits from him by stealth.

This

This connivance had once, as we have before described, very nearly suffered detection. The baron came near while Malvolio was in Osmond's chamber, but the latter hearing him approach, in a moment conveyed his friend into an adjoining closet.

After several conferences on the subject, it was agreed upon, that Osmond should retire from Bath and proceed to a certain house, which was hired for the occasion, there to wait till Malvolio had accomplished the point in view—that of carrying off Julia, whom he was enjoined to convey with all possible speed to his friend's abode.

To prevent any sudden alarm, the assailants were not to commence their attack on the baron and his family until they arrived at some recluse spot convenient for their purpose.

This,

This, as we have before related, was strictly conformed to, and the unhappy Julia was in an instant conveyed into the possession of the profligate emissary.

Malvolio exulted in the acquisition of his prize, and was preparing to secure the lady to himself, by the offer of a large bribe to the attendants; but the crafty Osmond, knowing that there was such a thing as treachery in the world, had taken care to select men whom he knew well and in whom he could confide.

Malvolio, disappointed in his object, and dreading the effects of his hypocrisy, made instantly a precipitate escape.

Bellgrove Castle, at which the baron and baroness had at length arrived,

was

was now become a scene of the most solitary description.

The period was come when this benevolent and amiable pair found themselves bereft of the dearest comforts of their lives.

Every time they ruminated on the repeated misfortunes which befel them, they felt additional pain and inquietude.

The absence of Orlando, in a dangerous expedition; the indifference and ingratitude of Osmond; and the alarming state of poor Julia—all operated as a very serious blow to their happiness.

Thus affected, the disconsolate pair knew not where to look for relief; luckily for them at this juncture they

received

received a letter from Orlando, the son on whom they doated.

This was a pleasure the baron and baroness had for months most anxiously expected, and they began to entertain some very uneasy sensations, after being so repeatedly disappointed.

Captain Bellgrove informed his parents, that he had most ardently watched for an opportunity to convey a letter to them, but could not obtain that good fortune for some time.

The baron and baroness were delighted to see him write in such excellent spirits, as Orlando informed them, that he was in an element that exactly corresponded with his inclination, and, that his companions were men of wit and good sense, *whose* conversation enlivened the

hours

hours and made time pass agreeably. —The Captain inserted his bosom friend's highest respects to the family, intimating, that they both often beguiled the hours by conversing on the pleasures they experienced at the place of embarkation, and that Fitzberbert, who was now promoted to a leutenancy, had a great desire, when ever he should return, to pay his respects to the baron and baroness at Bellgrove Castle. Finally, Julia was remembered by both the young soldiers in terms of more than common esteem; and Fitzherbert particularly requested that she would not quite forget her companion in the wood.

The letter concluded with an earnest desire to be informed, if they had received any intelligence respecting Osmond, and expressing the most en-

dearing

dearing terms of filial love to his parents, who wept for joy at this tribute of their son's affection.

The mention, however, of Julia cast a damp upon their spirits, and they sighed when they reflected how different her station was to what her two friends imagined it to be.

As the baron and his lady were one day ruminating on their unfortunate condition, it came into their minds to examine the paper which Julia's father had left behind him.

This was a measure they, at different periods, had in contemplation; but it was from time to time postponed, in consequence of the variable state of Julia's health.

Situated as they now were, deprived *of every* hope of seeing her again,

their

their feelings became stronger in her behalf, and they felt an increasing inclination to know the particulars of one whose image had ever been so dear to them.

So strongly did the afflictions of the old man occur to the baroness as she took the packet, and so forcibly did it bring the form of Julia to view, that the good lady shed tears as she proceeded to examine its contents.

On breaking open the first seal, the baroness found a witten paper inclosed, and, unfolding it, read as follows:

"In an agony of grief, which no
" pen can describe, I know not that
" I can do better for my unfortunate
" child than relating the particulars of
" my life, in which the humane reader,
" if ever such should come into pos-
" session of this paper, being made

" quainted with our distresses, may
" be persuaded to procure for my off-
" spring, that justice which it is to-
" tally out of my power to obtain,
" while a sense of my incapability, in
" this point of view, conveys the
" keenest anguish to my heart.

" Surrounded with the most dis-
" tressing poverty, destitute of com-
" mon necessaries, and in the way of
" seeing my beloved daughter perish
" before my eyes!—languid and ex-
" hausted, I can hardly hold the
" pen!---Oh! that Providence may
" hear my prayer and succour the
" unhappy companion of my sor-
" rows, now that I am incapable and
" declinnig hastily to my grave!

" I was the younger son of a gen-
" tleman of an ancient family, but
" small fortune, at whose decease,
" by the persuasion of my brother,

" we

"we agreed to divide the property; "and, each taking his share, engaged "in mercantile speculations, which "totally ruined me; but that which "my brother took in hand turned "out advantageously and led to the "acquirement of a considerable for-"tune. He, pitying my mifortunes, "generously allowed me a handsome "and respectable maintenance. I "lived upon terms of the greatest "affection with him, until such time "as I had married a person who, "though every way qualified to pro-"mote domestic happiness, and not "wholly destitute of fortune, was "not considered by him as an eligi-"ble match for one who had, until "my late disaster, moved in a style "of dignity and opulence.

"I thought it needless to reason "with my brother on the injustice of "his conduct, and left it to his

" choice to countenance my marriage
" with his usual regard or otherwise.
" A coolness ensued on both sides,
" and though we lived at small dis-
" tances from each other, no visits
" passed at either house for the space
" of a twelvemonth.

" This inflexible pride of my bro-
" ther hurt me much at times, as we
" hitherto had lived in the most af-
" fectionate manner.

" One day I received information
" that he had been seized with an
" alarming illness; I flew to his bed-
" side to condole with him in his af-
" fliction, and, notwithstanding there
" was a visible restraint in his counte-
" nance at my appearance, I thought
" it no small happiness to render him
" every assistance in my power.

" I became unremitting in my vi-
" sits

" sits to him, and had occasion soon " to rejoice in his recovery.

" Some weeks after this event my " brother, with much gravity in his " countenance, informed me he had " a proposal to make, which, he " thought, if I had a proper sense of " my own interests, I could not pru- " dently decline.

" I respectfully intreated him to " explain, and he proceeded by ob- " serving that, as I had a family " coming on, he thought a larger " provision than that I was then in " possession of would render my cir- " cumstances more agreeable to me.

" I thought this a noble act, " and was about to make a grate- " ful reply, when he continued— " I could wish, Charles, notwith- " standing any difference which has

" subsisted between us, to see you
" and your family comfortably set-
" tled; and, therefore, am about to
" double your income. I thanked
" him for this instance of his regard;
" when he proceeded—I have it in con-
" templation to make the tour of Eu-
" rope, and as I shall proceed leisurely
" in my route, it may, probably, be
" three or four years before I return.
" I have, however, resolved in my
" mind, that such an employment
" would be a solitary one without a
" companion, and I know of none
" whose society I should prefer to
" yours. A truce with all differences,
" cried my brother, and say you will
" accompany me.

" I paused some time for an answer
" to such a request, and at length in-
" treated him to recollect, that I had
" a wife and family who had a claim
" upon me for my attention.

" Be

" Be not uneasy on that point, ex-
" claimed my brother; as I before
" observed, they shall be provided
" for in the most ample manner.

" My eyes were now opened, and
" I clearly saw this was an artifice to
" separate me from my wife; and,
" without treating the proposal with
" that contempt it merited, I respect-
" fully told him, that I was much in-
" debted to him for any regard he
" might intend my family; but that,
" if he would present his whole
" property, it would not bribe me to
" act ungenerously to one who had
" invariably studied my happiness!

" Very well, sir, cried he impe-
" riously, if you have not a due
" sense of your own interest, remem-
" ber it is no fault of mine.

" From that period a coolness took

" place on both sides, which ended
" at last in a total rupture and sepa-
" ration.

" I was (as may be very well sup-
" posed) hurt at this disagreement
" between us; yet I returned to my
" family satisfied with my own con-
" duct, and viewing them in a still
" dearer light for the obloquy be-
" stowed upon them.

" As I lived at no great distance
" from my brother's residence, we
" sometimes met; and painful was the
" task to adopt a similar indifference
" which he instantaneously exhibited
" at the sight of me. A recon-
" ciliation would have been highly
" agreeable to me, but I could not
" condescend to seek it in terms de-
" grading to my family, and being a
" measure which he, at the same

" time,

" time, manifested no particular in-
" clination for.

" To avoid, in future, rencontres
" so unpleasant, I hinted to my wife
" my inclination to remove to some
" distant spot. She hesitated at first
" to consent, saying, it would be the
" happiest circumstance of her life to
" see me reconciled to my brother;
" and, as to any aversion shewn to
" her in her own person, she could
" cheerfully submit to it, provided it
" put an end to all variance in the
" family.

" It was, indeed, the principal
" study of this worthy woman to sof-
" ten those instances of my brother's
" conduct which I considered as un-
" generous and unjust.

" I told her there was a happiness I
" experienced in my family which

" the frowns of no one could dispos-
" sess me of, and that if my state
" was humble, it was not the less
" happy.

" In a few weeks we removed to a
" rural little spot, about twenty miles
" off, where the chief of my hap-
" piness cousisted in beholding the
" growing charms of my two daugh-
" ters, Louisa and Julia.

" I must confess this retirement
" constituted the happiest period of
" my life; but, though passionately
" fond of rural economy, I deter-
" mined upon bringing up my chil-
" dren in some of the blandishments
" of life, and was inexpressibly de-
" lighted to see them gradually pro-
" mise to become the ornaments and
" pride of their sex.

" Louisa was now arrived at her

" fifteenth

" fifteenth year, and had the advan-
" tage of her sister by three years;
" they were both extremely elegant
" in their persons, and often have we
" fed the pride of our hearts in con-
" templating the many flattering en-
" comiums bestowed upon them.

" Nothing seemed wanting to com-
" plete our happiness at this period.
" I attended the cultivation of my
" garden, and amused myself with
" several agricultural speculations,
" while my amiable spouse found
" equal delight in the superintend-
" ance of her family, and the manage-
" ment of her domestic duties. But
" man must not be too confident of
" his happiness in this life! A storm
" was gathering over me at this bliss-
" ful juncture, which was soon to
" disperse its baneful contents on my
" peaceful and serene abode!

"Alas! what anguish do I feel on
" a recollection of that heaven of
" human delight—fled never more to
" return!

"It was the wish of my heart,
" while I enjoyed uninterrupted re-
" pose, that my children should par-
" take of every amusement not in-
" jurious to their morals or reputa-
" tion.

"They every now-and-then paid
" visits to our neighbouring acquaint-
" ances, and, on their return, would
" beguile the remainder of the even-
" ing by recounting the many little
" innocent gaieties they had enjoyed.
" Sometimes I trusted them to a pub-
" lic ball, and, at other times, to the
" occasional diversions which happen
" in country places; in all which they
" exhibited a delight, the genuine
" offspring of innocence and health.

"But

" But now I enter upon a subject,
" the first cruel interruption to my
" happiness, at the thoughts of which
" my heart thrills with the keenest
" sensibility.

" My eldest daughter formed an
" attachment with a man of profli-
" gate principles, who seduced her
" from her home, and totally de-
" stroyed the peace of the family.

" When I discovered the intimacy,
" I cautioned Louisa against his insi-
" dious attempts; but, alas! my ad-
" vice was ineffectual! He had en-
" tangled her affections, and, like a
" consummate villain, lured her from
" her abode.

" Alas! Louisa, once the pride of
" my heart, perhaps at this moment
" thou art meditating, in the most
" wretched of all circumstances, on

" the melancholy effects of thy in-
" discretion; or, perhaps, wandering
" about in the garb of want and mi-
" sery, soliciting the solitary crumb
" to keep thee from perishing!—
" Wretched thou must be, but not
" wicked or abandoned!---No, my
" child, though thou hast been in-
" discreet, in the worst of conditions
" thy mind would recoil at vice and
" depravity!! Oh, Louisa! thou
" hast given thy father a woeful stab,
" such as nothing but a return to
" propriety and happiness can in any
" wise relieve * * * * * * *

" This desertion of Louisa went to
" her mother's heart; she grew sick
" and melancholy, and soon took to
" her bed; here she daily pined, and,
" in spite of all her endeavours to
" conceal the canker in her mind,
" I saw she was gradually sinking
" into her grave.

" In

"In the midst of this affliction, I
" every now-and-then cast an anxious
" look at Julia, and the recollection
" of her sister's misfortune filled me
" with alarm for her. . . . . . .

. . . .

" Julia was every thing that was
" good at this time; though discon-
" solate at her sister's absence, she
" exerted every effort to console us;
" whole nights and days would she
" sit by the bed-side of her heart-
" broken mother, whom she soothed
" with the most tender intreaties;
" often would she try to wear off the
" dulness of my countenance when
" she saw me gloomy, and strive, by
" every affectionate assiduity, to as-
" suage my affliction. The fond at-
" tention of my daughter was, in-
" deed, the only balm of comfort left,
" and what the strongest efforts of
" filial love and affection could pro-
" duce was effected by Julia's unre-

" mitting

" mitting care and attention. But, " to proceed, one day as I was sitting " by the side of my grief-worn wife, " I was alarmed by the sound of dif- " ferent voices below; thinking it an " unusual occurrence, I descended to " enquire the cause, and was immedi- " ately seized by three men, who an- " nounced to me, that I was their " prisoner. Struck with amazement, " I enquired on what account, urg- " ing that I did not owe a shilling in " the world. Make no parleying, " cried one of the brutes, look at this " paper. Upon examining it I found " it was an arrest for fifty pounds; " no remonstrances could prevail; " they dragged me away, and com- " mitted me to the county jail till " the affair should be settled.

" Distraction seized me at the " thoughts of quitting my wife, on " whom I was certain my captivity

" would

" would operate as a sentence of
" death. I raved for hours, and at
" length became insensible, in which
" state I lay a considerable while; at
" last I was visited by a gentleman
" with whom I had formerly been in
" the habits of intimacy; he con-
" doled with me in the most friendly
" terms, and told me my case was
" not so desperate as I imagined.—
" Strange and unaccountable! cried
" I * * * * * * * * *

" Be calm, my kind friend, cried
" my visitor, and I will explain to
" you the particulars. But my be-
" loved wife and child! continued I,
" with heart-rending emotion.

" The gentleman paused, and
" seemed to hesitate for a reply. O,
" Heavens! what a momentary shock
" did his reserve occasion me!—Ah!
" exclaimed I, with a heavy sigh, I

" see

" see fate has still greater misery in
" store for me; for God's sake, sir,
" relieve me of this dread suspense I
" feel concerning my Louisa!—Your
" wife, said he, with much gravity
" in his countenance, is happy be-
" yond expression.

" And is my beloved partner at
" length in heaven! Has Providence
" taken her to the celestial abodes!
" ---Then I have no pang on her ac-
" count, but the misery of separation,
" thanks to Heaven! cried I, shed-
" ding a shower of tears.

" I sat and paused in sullen medi-
" tation on my bitter condition till I
" became quite absent, and such a
" stupor had seized me, that I could
" not for a while comprehend what
" was said to me.

" My friend seeing me thus over-
" come

"come, made a motion to depart;
"at that moment the idea of liberty,
"and the image of my departed wife
"urged me to desperation. And
"shall the bars of this prison, cried I
"in a frantic tone, keep me from a
"last look on my Louisa! By Hea-
"vens, were their substance threefold
"what it is, I would burst them in-
"stantly asunder and force my way
"to the cold remains of the partner of
"my heart!

"So saying, I made a furious
"spring at the grating, and, striking
"my head against the wall in the at-
"tempt, rebounded in a state of ut-
"ter insensibility.

"I know not how long I conti-
"nued so; but, on recovering, found
"myself so confused, and my ideas
"altogether so bewildered, that every
"thing appeared as a dream to me.

"The

"The next day my friend visited
" me, and brought with him a release
" from my imprisonment. He ac-
" companied me to my house, where,
" when I arrived, I was so overcome
" as to be under the necessity of be-
" ing put to bed immediately, where
" I instantly relapsed into a swoon.

" When I recovered, I found my dear
" Julia grasping one of my hands and
" weeping piteously over me; a deep
" groan escaped me, and in a plain-
" tive tone I uttered something rela-
" tive to her mother. Julia's tears
" now came down in torrents. She
" embraced my hands with vehe-
" mence, and stood in the attitude of
" pensive sadness.

" It is too true then, exclaimed I,
" my Louisa is no more!---A trans-
" port of grief overwhelmed me;
" after which I became more calm,

" and

"and Julia, seeing me disposed to
" rest, left me to my repose, which
" was, indeed, balm to my distracted
" mind.

"When I awoke, though I experi-
" enced a lassitude in consequence of
" what I had suffered, yet my mind
" was more at ease, and I was en-
" abled to attend, with resignation,
" the obsequies of my departed wife.

" In a short time she was accom-
" panied to the grave by myself and
" Julia. The affectionate girl was
" inconsolable as the remains of her
" mother were committed to the dust.
" For my own part, I viewed the
" ceremony with the strongest as-
" surances that the deceased was
" far more happy than the highest
" sublunary enjoyments could make
" her.

" The day after I returned home
" my friend Musgrave and I entered
" into a conversation about my af-
" fairs; upon observing my impati-
" ence, he intreated me not to be
" alarmed, as every thing was in a
" fair way, but would require time
" for a complete adjustment.

" There was something so candid
" and generous in Musgrave's profes-
" sions, that I hesitated not a mo-
" ment to resign the whole charge
" into his hands.

" There is no doubt, he replied,
" but I shall be able to settle your
" affairs in such manner as to give
" you the most perfect satisfaction;
" and, should that be the case, you
" may remunerate me in any way you
" please

" May Heaven return your gene-

" rosity

" rosity tenfold, cried I with a " warmth of gratitude, and may - -

" Hold, cried Musgrave, the deed " is not yet accomplished; when it " is, then commend me as you may; " in the mean time it is necessary to " recruit your finances.

" I here felt myself abashed, which " my friend perceiving, he, in the most " indirect and handsome manner, put " a piece of paper into my hands, " desiring me to give him that testi- " mony of my friendship as to accept " the trifle he then offered me.

" It was in vain I refused; at " length I put the note in my pocket, " telling him at the same time, that " I was overwhelmed with this in- " stance of his generosity.

" Just before we parted he in-

" formed

" formed me I might use my own
" pleasure, either to reside where I
" was, or to seek some habitation
" more agreeable to me.

" I chose the latter, and in a few
" days quitted my once happy abode,
" and carried my Julia to a neat lit-
" tle sequestered cot in Yorkshire,
" where I was frequently visited by
" Musgrave, who gave me repeatedly
" the strongest assurances of the suc-
" cess of his undertakings.

" Encouraged by these hopes, and
" solaced by the unceasing and tender
" assiduities of my daughter, I was
" regaining my former state of mind.
" A sigh, however, would now-and-
" then escape me on recollection of
" my unhappy daughter, and the me-
" mory of my departed Louisa would
" at times throw a damp upon the
" scene; yet, upon the whole, I

" found

" found myself approaching to a state " of quietude and tranquillity.

" I now began hourly to expect " the arrival of Musgrave with final " and decisive accounts of my affairs " being settled, and was not a little " pleased with the prospect of return- " ing happiness; when, one evening, " as I was sitting in an alcove, over- " grown with sweet-briar, at the " front of my house, with Julia by " my side, alternately working and " amusing me with her conversation, " a stranger approached in a great " hurry, and in a tremulous tone re- " quested I would immediately step " to farmer Wilmot, who was in great " trouble, and would be glad of my " assistance.

" At the sound of trouble I started " from my seat, and, without en- " quiring into the particulars, im-

" mediately

" mediately accompanied the mes-
" senger to the farmer's. When I
" arrived, I found the person who
" had solicited my aid was arrested
" for thirty pounds, without any thing
" like the sum in the house, and not
" a friend to become responsible for
" him.

" I must here confess that my im-
" prudence was such, as immediately
" to become bail for him, without
" entering into a train of surmises
" and proviso's about the means of
" reimbursement.

" It was sympathy alone for suf-
" fering, which I had known the ex-
" perience of, that induced me to do
" this, as I had but a very slight ac-
" quaintance with the person for
" whom I became responsible.

" I returned home highly delighted
" with

" with the opportunity of saving a
" fellow-creature from the horrors of
" imprisonment, and, probably, total
" ruin; though I had, by so doing,
" risqued within a guinea or two the
" whole of my property. However, I
" comforted myself with the thoughts
" of having exerted myself in a kind
" action for one, who, I hoped, would
" not prove himself unworthy of it.

" At length the time arrived which
" was to relieve me of the engage-
" ment I had entered into, and I
" felt not a little impatient for the
" termination of it, having scarcely
" a shilling more than what would
" answer the debt in case I should
" be surprised.

" While I was hourly tormented
" with solicitude on this affair, to my
" utter astonishment, it was an-
" nounced to me, that the farmer

" had absconded, and that the whole
" of the debt fell upon me. I knew
" remonstrance, in such a case, was
" useless, and immediately applied to
" my cabinet and told out the last
" guinea I had in the world.

" Struck with confusion at my si-
" tuation, I endured an agony of
" suspense about the return of Mus-
" grave, as that was the only quarter
" to which I could look for relief.

" Day after day, however, passed
" on without any intelligence from
" him; and I began to fear that, for
" some purpose or other, I had been
" made the dupe of delusive pro-
" mises.

" Perplexed with the most painful
" ideas, I did every thing to conceal
" my uneasiness from Julia, who al-
" ways received me with the most
" agree-

" agreeable smiles, unconscious of the
" anguish that lay at my heart;
" however, now that I was reduced
" to my last penny, I found that I
" could not long keep the chagrin
" that preyed upon me a secret from
" my daughter.

" I began soon to be under the ne-
" cessity of obtaining my subsistence
" upon credit, and under such cir-
" cumstances as rendered it very
" doubtful whether I should ever be
" able to pay for what I procured;
" my suspense about my affairs be-
" came intolerable, and, calculating
" the expences I had incurred, with-
" out any visible means of paying
" them, it threw me on the rack. I
" pined in secret, and soon grew so
" ill, that poor Julia, on her knees,
" intreated me to tell her my woes.
" I at last, bursting into tears, ex-
" claimed, alas! Julia, your father

" is a beggar, and you will shortly " be thrown destitute on the world! " Julia implored me not to despair, " for if we were friendless we were " not helpless; these hands, cried my " affectionate daughter, shall be de- " voted to procure us sustenance; " nor shall any means in my power be " wanting to restore your happiness.

" Enough, my child, cried I; to- " morrow may make us happier; " surely Musgrave cannot be long.

" As I spoke this, I strove with all " my might to give an air of cheer- " fulness to the expressions, to pre- " vent Julia, as much as possible, " from becoming a partaker of my " grief, knowing such a circumstance " would be too trying for me to sus- " tain.

" One day, walking in deep me-

" ditation

" ditation in my garden, I was
" accosted by a stranger on horse-
" back, who enquired if my name
" was Woodville, and if so, he had
" particular business to communi-
" cate. I replied in the affirmative,
" and begged him to ride round the
" lane and alight at the front of the
" house, where I would attend him
" with pleasure. I ran into the house
" and exclaimed, my dear Julia, here
" are tidings of Musgrave! now, I
" hope, we shall be a little comfort-
" able! and immediately flew to as-
" sist him in dismounting; during
" this ceremony my impatience over-
" came me, so that I suddenly ex-
" claimed, you bring intelligence
" from one Musgrave, I presume.
" I do, indeed, bring some account
" of him, replied the stranger; but
" such as will in no wise afford you
" satisfaction. On hearing this I

 " started

" started back, and exhibited the
" strongest marks of confusion.

" Is it possible, then, that I can
" have been deceived, said I to him;
" surely Musgrave is an honest man.

" His conduct does not make him
" appear so, replied my companion.

" For Heavens sake, sir, cried I
" as we walked into the house, ac-
" quaint me with what has happened;
" my whole fortune depends upon
" his conduct.

" I am very sorry, cried the stran-
" ger to be the messenger of bad
" news; but I thought it might assist
" you towards discovering the perpe-
" trator of the fraud, by giving you
" the earliest intelligence; in plain
" terms, Musgrave is fled to the Con-
" tinent.

" Fled

" Fled to the Continent! cried I
" in amazement, at the same time
" throwing myself into a chair to pre-
" vent falling on the floor.

" It is a fact, sir, continued he.—
" Soon after his departure a report
" arose, that he was not the real
" heir.

" I begged of him to explain his
" meaning of the word heir. He
" then informed me of the death of
" my brother---a circumstance that
" affected me very much. Instantly
" I perceived the motive Musgrave
" had in persuading me to quit my
" former habitation, as my being re-
" moved from the spot would give
" him an opportunity of committing
" his depredations with security.

" After soliciting pardon for in-
" truding on his story, I begged him

" to proceed, when he informed me,
" that, led by the report, he was de-
" termined to make further enquiry
" into the business, and, having
" learned that a Mr. Woodville, who
" resided at a village near Rippon,
" was the proper claimant, motives of
" generosity induced him to apprise
" me of the circumstance; that it was
" with much difficulty he had traced
" my abode; but, should his under-
" taking this affair eventually prove
" successful to me, he should be
" fully recompensed for any pains
" this journey might have occasioned
" him.

" I thanked my visitor in the most
" respectful manner for his goodness,
" and hinted to him, that I had no-
" thing to do but to forego all hopes
" of acquiring the property, particu-
" larly as I was wholly destitute of
" means to enquire at all into the bu-
" siness.

" The

" The stranger now took out his
" purse, and, counting five guineas,
" desired I would accept them till
" better times, and advised me by all
" means to go in pursuit of the parti-
" culars.

" It was not without a great deal of
" intreaty I consented to receive the
" money, for which I gave him an
" acknowledgment in writing with
" my own signature, which my bene-
" factor put very carefully into his
" pocket.

" Before the stranger departed he
" further informed me Musgrave had
" been the cause of the unhappy
" breach between me and my brother,
" and had so insinuated himself into
" his good opinion, that, during his
" illness, he, by warrant of attorney,
" gave him full power to manage his
" affairs; this afforded Musgrave the

 " oppor-

" opportunity, on the decease of my
" brother, to secure the whole of his
" property, which was very consi-
" derable.

" Notwithstanding the blow I had
" received, I felt a secret satisfaction
" in the donation; it enabled me to
" pay off some arrears I had con-
" tracted. This was a measure I set
" about immediately after his depar-
" ture, but found myself suddenly de-
" pressed again, when I discovered,
" that, after my debts were settled,
" I had left only sufficient to carry
" me on in my journey.

" With a heavy heart I quitted my
" cottage, accompanied by Julia, to
" go in quest of further particulars of
" my brother's property, having lit-
" tle prospect of success in the un-
" dertaking.

" The intelligence I had received, " and the fatigue and anxiety I en- " dured, were too much for me. I " was seized with illness, which de- " tained me on the road some days, " and my stock became materially " exhausted; so that when I recom- " menced the journey I had but very " little money left.

" We had proceeded but a few " miles when I was seized with a re- " lapse, and, being totally incapable " of accomplishing the journey, took " refuge in this miserable abode.— " Alas! wretchedness and misery are " coming fast upon me.

" O, my daughter! Providence " protect!———O! if some kind " heart!——Approach—preserve my " daughter, and restore her to—— " rights!——Death approaches!—— " No more!!————

CHAPTER VIII.

THE baroness read this narrative in a solemn, audible voice; at intervals a groan escaped the baron, and the tears fell from the former. At the conclusion the baroness folded it up, and with a very melancholy impression deposited it again in her drawer; and, after sitting some time in a temporary gloom, she was awakened from her pensiveness by the baron, who intreated her to resume her usual cheerfulness; adding, that amidst this wide world, there *would* always be too copious a num-

ber

ber for the benevolence of one or two individuals either to know or relieve.

The baron continued in a soothing strain till he had, in some degree, revived the spirits of his lady. This he was induced to do, not from any want of humanity (on the other hand, the story had very much affected him), but from a wish that it might not make a permanent impression on her mind.

It was a matter of regret to the worthy pair they had not discovered Mr. Woodville's affairs earlier, that they might have afforded relief to so much merit in distress—and the time that had elapsed before the inspection of the paper was an additional uneasiness to them, as it was a circumstance that enabled the invader of the unhappy man's property to secure

every thing beyond the reach of recovery.

Nothing could exceed the affection which this paper had raised in the minds of the baron and baroness for poor Julia; every moment they reflected on the unhappy fate of this amiable maiden rendered her image still more dear and interesting to them, and the virtues and sufferings of Julia were constantly the theme of their discourse.

One night, after the family had retired to rest at the castle, a repeated loud knocking at the gate awakened the baron, who afterwards lay listening to know if it would be continued.

The noise ceased for awhile, but was soon after commenced with redoubled violence. He rang the bell, and it was not long before the servants

attended, amongst the foremost of whom was Peter. The baron paused a while, and was about to give directions to attend the nightly visitors; but as the knocking had now quite ceased, he told his servants to retire under the persuasion, that it could not be an affair of great emergency.

They had not left the room above half an hour when the noise at the gate again assailed the castle, accompanied by a storm, which, commencing with sudden gusts of wind, increased to a most violent hurricane. On a sudden all was still---and then succeeded such sheets of rain that the water ran from the leaden spouts of the castle like foaming cataracts; peals of thunder every now-and-then shook the building, while the sudden tremendous glare seemed as if it enveloped every thing in an universal blaze.

The

The noise at the gate awakened poor old Peter a second time, who was about to examine, with the assistance of his fellow servants, who it was, that, at such an unseasonable hour, requested admission into the castle; but the horrors of the night had quite unmanned him, and, as the noise began to decline, and not having received any summons from his master, he thought there could be no necessity for going.

His companions who had assembled were of the same opinion; they, therefore, all retired to bed; where, when the poor old man had arrived, he threw himself under the clothes to prevent being affected by the full glare of the storm.

In the morning, just as the baron was conversing with his lady on the *unusual* noise at the gate, a person

arrived

arrived who expressed a wish to see him on particular business.

He was accordingly introduced, and surprised the baron and his lady with an account that Julia was on her way home.

This intelligence threw the noble couple into a transport of joy, which, however, was somewhat deadened when they learned, that their unfortunate favourite lay at an inn, a few miles off, at the point of death.

" We presumed," cried the messenger, " fearing the approaching effects, to apprise you of the circumstance in the dead of night, but, finding our attempts vain, returned to the inn."

The baron expressed much concern that so kind an intention should not

have been attended to, asserting at the same time, "That, as the castle had been at times disturbed by vagrants, he considered the application as arising from some such cause."

He then invited the messenger to breakfast, and was much pleased with his respectable and honest appearance; and, after a slight repast, they proceeded to the inn which contained Julia.

Upon the arrival of the baron and baroness, they were ushered into Julia's aparment, where they found her in nearly an insensible state; soon after, however, she opened her eyes, looked faintly at them, and closed them again.

The baron and baroness stood some time in a mournful posture over her, suppos-

supposing they had arrived just time enough to see her expire.

They then retired to the further part of the room, and, seating themselves, waited in expectation of a crisis either favourable or fatal.

After a pause of some time, they walked to the bed-side and discovered that Julia had experienced so comfortable a repose as had refreshed her considerably.

She now recognized them, and attempted to raise herself up to embrace the baroness, but her strength failed in the attempt, and the kind lady intreated her, in urgent terms, to keep herself as composed as possible.

The baron now withdrew; but the baroness resolved to continue with

Julia till she should be well enough to be removed.

Soon as the former descended from the chamber he enquired after the kind person who had brought him intelligence of Julia, and was informed he was gone upon a visit to a place a few miles off. The baron left word that he should be happy to see him at dinner---an invitation which the stranger scrupulously attended to from other motives than that of making a formal visit.

The baron saluted his guest with great hospitality, which soon took off, in a great measure, that restraint which the latter at first experienced in his presence. A familiar discourse soon ensued, in which the visitor described himself the preserver of Julia.

The baron requested him to relate the

the particulars, upon which his honest companion informed him, that he had discovered her almost expiring, and leaning on a stile for support; that her groans attracted his compassion and induced him to fly to her assistance; that in the most gentle manner he lifted her upon his horse and conducted her to the inn, not without the most alarming apprehensions for her life. "However," continued the stran- " ger, amidst all my fears, it was no small satisfaction to me, that I was rendering a service to one of the family of Baron Bellgrove."

The baron offered the greatest courtesy for such an instance of respect for him, and said, "He should ever be proud of the kind interpositions of such a friend. But pray, my good sir," continued he, "in what respect have I been so fortunate as to merit such esteem?"

"Sir,"

"Sir," cried the baron's visitor, "I have had the honour of entertaining your son under my humble roof, and received so many instances of his affability and goodness, as have made me ever since feel the warmest wishes for the welfare of the family."

The baron sprang from his seat, and taking hold of his visitor's hand, exclaimed with an effusion of esteem—"And have I then my kind friend Myrtle under my roof!"

"My name is Myrtle, sir," answered the other, "and I should be heartily glad to see my worthy inmate again."

Here the baron, with a sigh, informed Myrtle "That the person he manifested such esteem for was abroad; but that he hoped a time *would* come when Orlando would

have

have an opportunity of reminding, and thanking him for his hospitality."

The farmer was entertained by his noble host throughout the day with the greatest friendship and conviviality; but took his leave early in the evening, as he was under the necessity of returning home in a limited time.

On the afternoon of the next day, Julia was so much better as to be able, by slow paces, to proceed to the castle: her return to which, though in a languid state, occasioned inexpressible happiness to the baron and baroness.

In a few days she was so far recovered as to be able to hold a regular conversation with the family---a circumstance which the baroness anxiously waited for, from the great af-

fection she possessed for her, as also to know the particular events of her disaster.

When this worthy lady hinted to Julia a wish to this effect, the latter appeared very reserved, and evinced an emotion at the same time that increased the solicitude and curiosity of the baroness.

" I am not, my dear Julia, fond of hearing tales of distress, particularly where a person we love has been the sufferer; but the violence you have experienced seems to arise from some extraordinary machinations, the perpetrators of which I wish much to be acquainted with."

Julia appeared very much embarrassed at the importunities of the baroness, which were delivered in such *a tone* as she saw clearly would admit *of no* denial. She

She then, with tears in her eyes, confessed it was the greatest trial she had ever experienced, to be under the necessity of repeating what must shock the baroness, and appear like a dishonour to the family.

"You alarm me, my dear," cried that good lady; "but at all events let me know the particulars."

Julia still appeared to be under a particular dilemma, till observing that she had excited apprehensions in the mind of her benefactress, which nothing but a direct avowal would satisfy, in a faultering voice exclaimed ---"Oh, madam! Osmond has been the disturber of our repose!"

"Gracious Heavens!" cried the baroness, "is it possible Osmond can have been so consummate a villain!"

" Dear madam," replied Julia, " let me beg of you not to alarm yourself so much; the villainy, I am happy to say, has been providentially frustrated."

" Oh, Julia! this is heart-breaking ---that the baron should have so long cherished a viper in his bosom!"

" I assure you, my dear madam," cried Julia, " that I would for ever have been silent on the affair, rather than have occasioned you a moment's pain; but there has been something so awful and mysterious attending the transaction, as excites in me a kind of timid curiosity I cannot well explain."

Here the lovely maiden turned pale, and the baroness, observing that her feelings on the occasion had exhausted her strength, intreated her to forbear entering into particulars for *the* present, saying---" As she had

some

some visits to make she would hear the narrative on her return."

Towards the evening the baroness found an opportunity to be alone with her favourite, whom she intreated to commence her narrative without disguise.

Julia, with a sigh, then began :---

" The moment I was taken from
" the carriage, madam, I was forci-
" bly conveyed to a chaise a little
" distance off, and, being hastened
" into it, was placed between two
" men masked, who instantly drew
" up the blinds and urged me, upon
" pain of immediate death, to be
" silent.

" What little sense I had left dic-
" tated to me to obey them, and the

" chaise went off with the greatest ra-
" pidity.

" We travelled, as I conjecture,
" full three hours without stopping,
" but at length drew up in a lonely
" lane, close by a stile. I was desired
" to alight, and was obliged to hold
" the arm of each of my persecutors
" while they conducted me across a
" field or two, which brought us
" to a forlorn and miserable-looking
" house.

" The moment we arrived an ill-
" favoured looking woman came out
" of the place and offered to shew
" me to an apartment. It was not
" without inexpressible fear and agi-
" tation I followed her up stairs. She
" then ushered me into a neat room,
" but dreary in its situation.

" The wretch, after introducing
" me

" me, in a stern voice bade me be " obedient, and then, turning the " key on me, left me to my medita- " tions.

" Judge, madam, of my apprehen- " sions in this state of suspense. I " threw myself into a chair and burst " into a flood of tears; my ideas were " raised to the highest pitch of alarm, " as I knew not what horrid inten- " tion was meditating against me.

" In about half an hour the old " woman returned, bringing me in " some wine and other refreshment, " which, fatigued as I was, I refused " to touch. My attendant was about " to assume a peremptory tone; but, " seeing me inflexible, she forbore to " persist.

" Though I cannot express the " alarm I felt at first, yet, from the

" rude and imperious behaviour of " this sordid wretch, I collected a " degree of resentment, and, being " ready to burst with chagrin and " vexation, cried—Tell me by what " authority I am made a prisoner in " this place and treated thus indig- " nantly?

" I am under no obligation to tell " you any thing, answered she sur- " lily, and immediately quitted the " room. In about half an hour my " attendant returned, and, after ar- " ranging things for the night, quit- " ted me with observing, that I was " at liberty to retire when ever I " chose.

" I slept in great alarm the first " night, dreading every moment to " be surprised with violence of some " sort; my slumbers were short and " broken off with some horrid reverie,

" and

" and I should have prayed most
" heartily for the return of day, but
" that I thought it would produce
" something fatal and mischievous.

" The next morning I was invited
" to walk in the garden, a place in-
" closed with a high wall, which I
" surveyed with a very heavy heart;
" considering it as precluding every
" hope of escape.

" I passed several days in a state of
" solitary and dismal suspense, seeing
" no one but the person who at first
" attended me, who became now a
" little more civil.

" The day that I made my escape
" she ran into my apartment, saying,
" she had some agreeable news to re-
" late to me. I arose with an emo-
" tion of joy, thinking she might
" have felt some compassion for me,

" and was willing to aid me in an
" escape.

" Tell me, cried I with earnestness,
" what is the favourable intelligence
" you have to impart.

" Why, my dear miss, answered
" the Jezebel, here is a gentleman
" coming to-day who is positively
" quite in love with you and wishes
" to bestow his whole fortune upon
" you.

" Nothing could exceed the morti-
" fication I endured at this insulting
" intimation, particularly at the mo-
" ment when I had put the most
" favourable construction on what
" she had at first insinuated.

" Wretched and unmeaning stuff!
" cried I contemptuously.

" Release

" Release me from my confinement
" and I will plentifully reward you.

" Just as I finished this sentence I
" thought I saw something in her
" countenance as if she had relented,
" and, catching at the happy mo-
" ment, offered her my purse to
" assist me in my purposes; but
" was mistaken in my conjectures.
" She was inexorable, and treated
" my proposal with disdain.

" The time now arrived when I was
" to behold my inhuman persecutor.

" A gentleman suddenly entered
" the room, and how shall I, dear
" madam, express the surprise and
" astonishment I felt, when I beheld
" in this visitor the person of Osmond.
" I flew to him and upbraided him
" for his base and ungenerous con-
" duct.

" Be not incensed, my angel, cried " he, what I have done is owing to " my excessive fondness for you.

" This exceeds the worst I could " have supposed you capable of, I " replied, to carry me off from my " friends in a ruffian-like manner, and " then to insult an unprotected female " with any language you please, be- " cause she is totally in your power!

" This is treatment which debases " you beneath the man!

" These are needless and absurd " prejudices, exclaimed he, and pro- " ceeded to treat me in a manner that " excited in me the greatest alarm. " I shrieked, and he desisted; I " then kneeled and intreated him to " permit me to return home; this he " refused, and darted out of the " apartment with a look of anger.

" In

" In a little while he returned, and
" began to make such odious propo-
" sals to me, as filled me with the
" worst of apprehensions. I intreated,
" I supplicated and implored him to
" desist, and not to act with bruta-
" lity towards one with whom he had
" lived on terms of affection and re-
" spect. Osmond was all this while
" insensible to my remonstrances, and
" rather increased in his insulting
" rudeness to me.

" I now ran about the apartment,
" hoping to observe some place of
" escape; he pursued me with his
" disgusting solicitations.

" Driven almost to distraction with
" such base and insidious importuni-
" ties, I exclaimed—O, God! pro-
" tect me in this trying moment!—
" when suddenly a deep groan from

" some

" some part of the room made him
" start back with precipitation.

" This sound produced a degree of
" awe in my mind, while my persecu-
" tor stood transfixed with surprise
" and terror. In this moment of
" astonishment a voice exclaimed—
" Forbear, inhuman wretch! to per-
" sist in thy barbarities! let the fate
" of the murdered Louisa warn thee
" to repent!!

" Here the voice ceased, and Os-
" mond, with a countenance pale as
" death, rushed instantly out of the
" room. I stole this opportunity of
" making to the door, and passed
" unmolested out of the house, from
" whence I proceeded to the garden-
" gate, which fortunately being left
" open at this period, I fled with the
" utmost haste across the fields, and
" soon got into the high road, where,

" a stage-coach coming by, without
" enquiring in what direction it was
" going, I precipitately got into it,
" hoping thereby to elude all pursuit.
" I found, however, upon the coach
" putting up, that I was at a consi-
" derable distance from the castle.
" The next day I set out in a stage
" that was coming within twenty
" miles of this spot, and, arriving at
" its place of destination, immedi-
" ately took a chaise to bring me the
" remaining part of the way, which
" unfortunately broke down within
" seven miles of the castle, and I had
" no opportunity of continuing my
" course, but by walking all that
" distance. When I had proceeded
" about two miles, I found myself so
" exhausted, that I retired into a
" field by the side of the road and re-
" clined myself on some straw; after
" which, in a languid and faultering
" state, I reached a stile, where I

" thought every moment would have
" been the last. In the midst of my
" distress a traveller, happening to
" pass, took notice of my condition,
" and, with the greatest tenderness
" and care, assisted me to reach the
" inn, where you, my good madam,
" and the baron, were pleased to vi-
" sit me * * * * * * * *."

" Good Heavens !" said the baroness, at the conclusion of Julia's story, " what a narrative ! and that you should owe your sufferings to one whom nature should have taught to have protected you, is a lamentable and cruel circumstance indeed !"

The baroness gave a deep sigh as she uttered this, and a considerable pause ensued, during which that lady exhibited a mixture of sorrow and indignation. At length she endeavoured to give a fresh turn to the conver-

conversation, and, after a little discourse with Julia upon some other subject, quitted the room.

When Julia found herself alone she entered into a train of reveries on her repeated misfortunes. The violence which she had suffered and the consequent alarm did not affect her near so much as the apprehension of the the unpleasant effect which Osmond's perfidy would have upon the minds of her worthy benefactors. She loved them with the fondest affection, and it hurt her much that she should become the innocent cause of disturbing their peace and producing, at the same time, a breach in the family.

On the other hand, it appeared to her to be acting strictly conformably to discretion and the respect she owed the baroness, to be ingenuous in so serious an affair, supposing, with great

propriety, that attempts might be made, in other respects, to the prejudice of the baron and his family, by a man who had been guilty of the outrage she had experienced.

While she was lamenting her hard case, the baroness was making to her lord a discovery of Osmond's treachery. He could hardly credit the intelligence at first, so base did the attempt appear in his eyes; but, on second thoughts, Julia's sincerity was not to be doubted; she had ever conducted herself in the most candid, open, and ingenuous way; nor could he, for a moment, admit the idea, that she could be capable of artifice for any purpose whatever. The conduct of Osmond had become, in his idea of things, very dubious, and he more than once thought the mystery that hung about his conduct could have no good motive. Thus influenced,

the

the baron was as it were prepared for some developement of Osmond's real character ; and now that his guilt was exposed, by an unequivocal testimony, he determined to admit him in his presence no more.

Though the baron considered Osmond's conduct in the highest degree of atrocity, there were other contingent matters which made him shudder.

The mysterious interposition of Julia's intended nuptials, with the terrifying and unaccountable expressions which escaped him at that time, and the strange interruption to his designs on Julia, attended with a miraculous intimation of the most awful nature---all led him into a firm persuasion, that there had been something in the conduct of Osmond of a very solemn and heinous nature.

Influenced with such an idea, he was more than once on the point of writing to Osmond an admonitory letter, hoping that, whatever his crimes might have been, they would admit of a reform, and that he might yet become a worthy member of society.

But when the former recollected the ambition and haughtiness of Osmond, he thought such a measure might only provoke him to fresh acts of ingratitude, and, perhaps, insult. The baron, therefore, at once relinquished his designs, and abandoned him for ever.

END OF VOLUME III.

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